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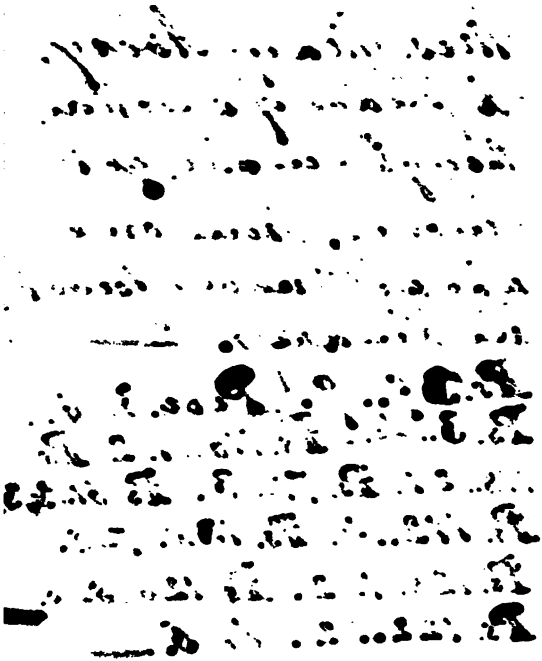

AND HIMS OF JOY ARE RINGING
WHILE OLD FRIENDS PRESS TO MEET HIM.

PAGE 47.

THE MOURNERS BOOK.

"TO THINK THE COLD GRAVE NOW MUST CLOSE
O'ER WHAT WAS ONCE THE CHIEF
OF ALL THY TREASURED JOYS OF EARTH —
THIS IS A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

PAGE 118

PHILADELPHIA:
WILLIAM MARSHALL & Co.

AND HYMNS OF JOY ARE SINGING,
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PAGE 27.

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THE

MOURNER'S BOOK.

BY A LADY.

PHILADELPHIA:
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PREFACE.

THERE is much wisdom in the counsel of the sacred writer, "In the day of adversity, consider." Affliction, a stern but efficient teacher, disposes the mind and heart to receive instruction. When bereavement comes upon us, we are naturally disposed to look beyond the perishable treasures and gratifications of this world, and seek for something on which we may stay our souls with unwavering confidence; some rock of refuge which no tempest can shake—no torrent remove. It seems to be a principle implanted in our constitution by the Creator, that the unavoidable sorrows of this life should convince us of its uncertainty; and divert the mind from that which is finite and perishable, to the illimitable and immortal—the future world; which is the home of the soul, the object of its constant though, sometime, unconscious aspirations. The discovery of the utter incompetency of earthly objects to satisfy the desires of an immortal soul, is often the beginning of a new life; and this discovery most frequently results from some stroke of affliction.

An afflicted person who is desirous to make a proper and christian use of the dispensations of Providence, is willing to keep the subject in his mind by meditation and prayer; and by reading. He has frequent recourse to the word of God for assistance and direction; and he seeks for other serious books, which offer advice and sympathy suited to the circumstances of his case. It is soothing and grateful to him to have the mourners of other times and distant lands breathe forth

their sorrows in the language which his own feelings are prompting him to utter. Heart speaks to heart, and a common sorrow unites him in strong bonds of brotherhood with all of his race, who have mourned like himself. When the heart is thus softened by sympathy, it is ready to hear the voice of Christian counsel, and learn the precious uses of adversity. Then is the period when much may be done by serious admonition and affectionate warning—when every thing may be hoped from persevering effort on the part of Christian friends. It is the season when the thoughtless may be awakened, and the pious rendered more diligent in their duties; when all who have felt the chastening may participate in its corrective influence.

To aid in the proper use and application of seasons of adversity, this little volume has been prepared. It is the work by which a bereaved parent sought to impress on her own mind, as well as to urge upon the minds of others, the importance of making a pious use of afflictive events. The employment afforded by the prosecution of it, has mitigated the anguish of a wound which none but the Great Physician can heal. She trusts that the reading of its pages may be as consolatory to others, as the preparation of them has been to herself; and that it may lead those who are called upon to mourn their departed blessings and friends, to rest their hopes on Him that is able to console and to save.

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THE

MOURNER'S BOOK.

AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD THE BEST SUPPORT UNDER AFFLICTIONS.

THE exceeding corruption and folly of man are in nothing more manifest, than in his averseness to entertain any friendship or familiarity with God; though he was framed for that very end, and endued with faculties fittest to attain it; though he stands, and cannot but be sensible that he stands, in the utmost want of it; though he be invited, and encouraged to it, frequently and earnestly, by God himself; and though it be his chief honour, advantage, and happiness, as well as his duty, to comply with those invitations.

In all cases where the body is affected with pain or sickness, we are forward enough to look out for remedies, to listen greedily to every one that suggests them, and, upon the least hopes of success, from the reports of others, immediately to apply them. And yet, notwithstanding that we find and feel our souls disordered and restless, tossed and disquieted by various passions, distracted between contrary ends and interests, ever seeking happiness in the enjoyments of this world, and ever missing what they seek; notwithstanding that we are assured from other men's experience, and from our own inward convictions, that the only way of regulating these disorders is, to call

off our minds from too close an attention to the things of sense, and to employ them often in a sweet intercourse with our Maker, the Author of our Being, and fountain of all our ease and happiness; yet are we strangely backward to lay hold of this safe, this only method of cure: we go on, still nourishing the distemper under which we groan, and choose rather to feel the pain, than to apply the remedy. Excellent, therefore, was the advice to Job, in the midst of his great trouble and pressures, "Acquaint thyself now with God, and be at peace." Take this opportunity of improving thy acquaintance with him, to which he always, but now especially, invites thee: make the true use of those afflictions which his hand, mercifully severe, hath been pleased to lay upon thee; and be led by the means of them, though thou hast endeavoured to know and serve him already, to know and serve him still better; to desire and love him more. Calm the disorders of thy mind by reflections on his paternal goodness and tenderness; on the wisdom, and equity, and absolute rectitude of all his proceedings: comfort thyself with such thoughts at all times, but chiefly at that time when all earthly comforts fail thee.

We shall, in the first place, consider what this Scripture-phrase, of "acquainting ourselves with God," implies, and wherein the duty particularly recommended by it consists.

We are prone by nature to engage ourselves in too close and strict an acquaintance with the things of this world, which immediately and strongly strike our senses; with the business, the pleasures, and the amusements of it; we give ourselves up too greedily to the pursuit, and immerse ourselves too deeply in the enjoyment of them; and contract

at last such an intimacy and familiarity with them, as makes it difficult and irksome for us to call off our minds to a better employment, and to think intensely on any thing besides them. To check and correct this ill tendency, it is requisite that we should "acquaint ourselves with God;" that we should frequently disengage our hearts from earthly pursuits, and fix them on divine things; that we should apply ourselves to study the blessed nature and perfections of God, and to procure lively and vigorous impressions of his perpetual presence with us, and inspection over us; that we should contemplate earnestly and reverently the works of nature and grace, by which he manifests himself to us; the inscrutable ways of his providence, and all the wonderful methods of his dealing with the sons of men: that we should inure ourselves to such thoughts till they have worked up our souls into that filial awe and love of him, that humble and implicit dependence upon him, which is the root and principle of all manner of goodness; till we have made our duty, in this respect, our pleasure, and can address ourselves to him on all occasions, with readiness and delight; imparting all our wants, and expressing all our fears, and opening all our griefs to him, with that holy freedom and confidence to which the saints and true servants of God are entitled.

The first step towards an "acquaintance with God," is a due knowledge of him. I mean not a speculative knowledge, built on abstracted reasonings about his nature and essence, such as philosophical minds often busy themselves in, without reaping thence any advantage towards regulating their passions, or improving their manners; but I mean a practical knowledge of those attributes of

his, which invite us nearly to approach him, and closely to unite ourselves to him; a thorough sense and vital experience of his paternal care over us, and concern for us; of his unspotted holiness, his inflexible justice, his unerring wisdom, and his diffusive goodness; a representation of him to ourselves, under those affecting characters of a Creator and a Redeemer, an Observer and a Pattern, a Lawgiver and a Judge; which are aptest to incline our wills, and to raise our affections towards him, and either to awe or allure us into a stricter performance of every branch of our duty. These, and the like moral and relative perfections of the Deity, are most necessary, and most easy to be understood by us; upon the least reflection and inquiry, we cannot miss them; though the oftener, and more attentively we consider them, the better, and more perfectly still shall we know them.

The acquaintance, thus begun, cannot continue, without frequent access to him; without "seeking his face continually," in all the methods of spiritual address; in contemplation, and in prayer; in his word, and in his ordinances; in the public service of the sanctuary, and in the private devotions of the closet; and chiefly in the latter of these, which are, on several accounts, most useful towards promoting this holy correspondence. By these means, and in these duties, is he to be approached and found; and, notwithstanding our infinite distance, will "draw near to them who thus draw near to him," and show himself to be "a God" that "is at hand," and "not afar off."

But in vain shall we approach him, unless we endeavour to be like him. A similitude of nature and manners (in such a degree as we are capable

of) must tie the holy knot, and rivet the friendship between us. Whomsoever we desire to approve, we labour also to conform ourselves to; to be "not only almost, but altogether such as they are," if it be possible; that so they, seeing themselves in us, may *like* us, for the sake of themselves. Would we then be admitted into an acquaintance with God? Let us study to resemble him. We must be "partakers of a divine nature," in order to partake of this high privilege and alliance! "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Yet, further, one essential ingredient in all true friendships, is a firm, unshaken reliance on him who is our friend. Have we such towards God? Do we entirely trust in him? Do we resign ourselves and our affairs absolutely to be disposed of by him? and think all our concerns safer in his hands than in our own? and resolve to believe every thing to be best and fittest for us which he sees best should befall us? Are we still under his rod without a murmur? without despondency of mind, and without charging God foolishly? Do we unbosom all our secrets to him, and neither endeavour nor pretend to hide any thing that passeth in the depth of our hearts from him? Do we inquire of him for his advice and assistance in every thing? and hearken to what our Lord God shall say to us, either by the inward whispers of our consciences, or the outward ministry of his Word, or the awakening calls of his Providence? and give heed diligently to fulfil all the least intimations of his good pleasure that are any ways made known to us? Then have we entered deep into, and ad-

vanced far in that holy intimacy which the text recommends.

However, "yet one thing more we lack" to be perfect, *love*, which is the fulfilling of this law of friendship, the surest test and most exalted improvement of it.

Let us consider, therefore, whether we do indeed "love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength." Whether our approaches to him are always sweet and refreshing; and we are uneasy and impatient under any long discontinuance of our conversation with him; and retire with pleasure into our closet from the crowd, in order to meet him whom our soul loveth. Whether our love of life, and our complacence in the good things of it, slacken every day, and even our dread of death is, in some measure, vanquished; and we do, whilst we are contemplating the joys of another state, almost "desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ."

When we perceive ourselves to be, after this manner, "rooted and grounded in love," then is our spirit advanced to the nearest degree of union with the great Father of Spirits of which it is capable on this side heaven; and we are, indeed, "the friends of God."

I proceed now, in the second place, to consider how reasonable, desirable, and necessary a thing it is thus to acquaint ourselves with God; as on many other accounts, so particularly on this, that it is the only true way towards attaining a perfect tranquillity and rest of mind; "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace."

Honour, profit, and pleasure, are the three great idols to which the men of this world bow; and

one, or all of which, is generally aimed at in every human friendship they make: and yet, though nothing can be more honourable, profitable, or pleasing to us, than an acquaintance with God, we stand off from it, and will not be tempted, even by these motives, though appearing to us with the utmost advantage, to embrace it.

Can any thing improve, and purify, and exalt our natures more than such a conversation as this, wherein our spirits, mounting on the wings of Contemplation, Faith, and Love, ascend up to the first principle and cause of all things; see, admire, and taste his surpassing excellence, and feel the quickening power and influence of it till we ourselves thus, "with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed (gradually and insensibly changed) into the same image, from glory to glory," from one degree of perfection and likeness to another?

What an honour is it to us that God should admit us into such a blessed participation of himself? that he should give us minds capable of such an intercourse with the Supreme Universal Mind? and shall we be capable of it without enjoying it?

In what conversation can we spend our thoughts and time more profitably than in this? To whom can we betake ourselves with greater expectations to succeed in our addresses? Upon whom can we rely with more security and confidence? Is he not our most munificent benefactor, our wisest counsellor, and most potent protector and friend? both able and willing to do every thing for us, that it becomes either us to ask or him to grant. Are not the blessings both of this world and the next in his disposal? And is not his favour and good will the only sure title that we can plead to them?

And shall we spend our time, therefore, in cultivating useless and perishing acquaintances here below, to the neglecting that which is of the vastest concern to us, and upon which our everlasting welfare depends? Shall we not rather say, with St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

In the third and last place, let us show that the most proper season for such a religious exercise of our thoughts is, when any sore trouble or calamity overtakes us: "Acquaint thyself *now* with him," said Eliphaz to Job; that is, now, when the wise Disposer of all things hath thought fit to pour out affliction upon thee; then that *peace*, or sweet calm and repose of mind which the text mentions, is most needful for thee, and is always and only to be had from the same hand that wounded thee.

At such times our soul is most tender and susceptible of religious impressions, most apt to "seek God, to delight in approaching him," and conversing with him, and to relish all the pleasures and advantages of such a spiritual commerce. The kind and chief design of God, in all his severest dispensations, is to melt and soften our hearts to such degrees as he finds necessary, in order to the good purposes of his grace; and so to dispose and prepare them every way, as that they may become fit mansions for his holy spirit to dwell in; to wean us gently and gradually from our complacence in earthly things, which we are too apt to rest in, though we are sure that we must one day part with them; to convince us of the vanity of all the satisfactions which this world affords, and to turn our thoughts and expectations towards the joys of another.

When the hand of God lies heavy upon us, we

plainly discern our own insufficiency and weakness, and yet see nothing about or near us that can afford us any real relief: and, therefore, we fly to *Him* who only can, who is rich in mercies and mighty to save; both able and willing to stretch himself out to all our wants, and to fill our emptiness. Even they who, in their prosperity, forget God, do yet remember and turn to him when adversity befalls them. They who, whilst the course of things goes smoothly and happily on, and every passion of theirs is entertained, every wish is gratified, find no room for thoughts of this kind, but are so taken up with enjoying the blessings, as not to be at leisure to consider the great Author and Bestower of them; even these persons do, in the day of their distress, take refuge in reflections on the benignity and goodness of God; and begin then to think of him with some kind of pleasure (though alloyed with doubts and fears), when they can with pleasure think of nothing besides him. How much more shall devout or blameless souls, which have never been strangers to these considerations, retreat to them in an evil hour with eagerness, and rest in them with the utmost satisfaction and delight? The acquaintance which they stand in need of for their support, is not now first to be made: it has been contracted long ago, and wants only to be renewed and applied to particular exigencies and occasions.

When once we have early and thoroughly devoted ourselves to God, there are no trials of our virtue and courage so sharp, no evils so great, but that we can sustain and bear them: for "God is our hope and strength, a very present help in time of trouble:" and, therefore, we resort to him on such occasions with the utmost readiness and con-

fidence, even as a son doth to a beloved and loving parent, or a friend to the friend of his bosom, "casting all our care upon him," as knowing that "he careth for us."

Let us, throughout the whole course of our lives, take care to make the thoughts of God so present, familiar, and comfortable to us here, that we may not be afraid of appearing face to face before him hereafter. Let us so inure our minds to those faint views of him which we can attain to in this life, that we may be found worthy to be admitted into the blessed vision of him in the next, when, in his presence, "there will be fulness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore."

ATTERBURY.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

THE records of time are emphatically the history of death; a whole review of the world, from this hour to the age of Adam, is but the vision of an infinite multitude of dying men. During the more quiet intervals, we perceive individuals falling into the dust, through all classes and all lands.

Then come floods, and conflagrations, famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, and battles, which leave the most crowded and social scenes silent. The human race resembles the withered foliage of a wide forest; while the air is calm we perceive single leaves scattering here and there from the branches; but sometimes a tempest or whirlwind precipitates thousands in a moment.

It is a moderate computation which supposes a

hundred thousand millions to have died since the exit of righteous Abel. Yes, it is true, that ruin has entered the creation of God! That sin has made a breach in that innocence which fenced man round with immortality! Even now, the great Spoiler is ravaging the world.

As mankind have still sunk into the dark gulf of the past, history has given buoyancy to the most wonderful of their achievements and characters, and caused them to float down the stream of time to our own age. It is well; but if, sweeping aside the pomp and deception of life, we could draw from the last hours and death-beds of our ancestors, all the illuminations, convictions, and uncontrollable emotions of heart, with which they have quitted it; what a far more affecting history of man should we possess! Behold all the gloomy apartments opening, in which the wicked have died! Contemplate, first, the triumphs of iniquity, and here behold their close; witness the terrific faith, the too late repentance; the prayers suffocated by despair, and the mortal agonies!

These once they would not believe; they refused to consider them; they could not allow that the career of time and pleasure was to end. But now, truth, like a blazing star, passing through a midnight sky, darts over the mind, and but shows the way to that "darkness visible," which no light can cheer. Dying wretch! we say in imagination to each of these, is religion true? Do you believe in a God, in another life, and a retribution? O yes, he answers, and expires.

But, "the righteous hath hope in his death." Contemplate, through the unnumbered saints that have died, the soul, the true and unextinguishable life of man, charmed away from this globe by

celestial music, and already respiring the gales of eternity. If we could assemble in one view, all the adoring addresses to the Deity, all the declarations of faith in Jesus, all the gratulations of conscience, all the admonitions and benedictions to weeping friends, and all the gleams of opening glory; our souls would burn with the sentiment which made the wicked Balaam devout for a moment, and exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his!"

These revelations of death would be the most emphatic commentary on the revelation of God. What an affecting scene is a dying world! Who is that destroying Angel whom the Eternal has employed to sacrifice all our devoted race? Advancing onward over the whole field of time, he hath smitten the successive crowds of our hosts with death; and to us he now approaches nigh. Some of our friends have trembled, and sickened, and expired, at the signals of his coming; already we hear the thunder of his wings; soon his eye of fire will throw mortal fainting on all our companions; his prodigious form will to us blot out the sun, and his sword sweep us all from the earth; for "the living know that they shall die."

It is a difficult thing to be a Christian. I feel the necessity of reform through all my soul; when I retire into thought, I find myself environed by a crowd of impressive and awful images; I fix an ardent gaze on Christianity; assuredly, the last best gift of heaven to men; on Jesus, the agent and example of infinite love; on time, as it passes away; on perfection, as it shines as beauteous as heaven, and, alas! as remote; on my own beloved soul, which I have injured, and on the unhappy

multitude of souls around me: and I ask myself, why do not my passions burn? Why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath to dash my icy habits in pieces, to scourge me from indolence to fervid exertion, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust? At intervals, I feel devotion and benevolence, and a surpassing ardour; but when they are turned towards substantial, laborious operation, they fly, and leave me spiritless amid the iron labour.

Still, however, I confide in the efficacy of persistive prayer; and I hope, that the Spirit of the Lord will yet come mightily upon me, and carry me on through toils, and sufferings, and death, to stand on Mount Zion among the followers of the Lamb!

REFLECTIONS SUGGESTED ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF A DEAR AND MUCH LAMENTED FRIEND.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.—
LUKE, ii. 29.

A pilgrim fainting for the rest to come;
An exile, anxious for his native home.
HANNAH MORE.

'T is sweet, 't is soothing to the mourner's mind, when called to stand by the dying-bed of much loved friends to witness such composedness and tranquillity in the hour of death, yea, more, such holy longings to depart and be with Jesus.

What but the "glorious gospel of the blessed God" can support and animate the mind at those solemn periods? when the world with all its al-

lurements is rapidly receding from our view, and the attenuated thread, which binds us to earth, is dissolving for ever:—while weeping friends are silently watching our last agonies, and with tender solicitude removing the clay-cold damps which sit upon our forehead. In the midst of all the sufferings of our now wasted fabric, to feel a holy calm within, and to be enabled peacefully to contemplate the silent sepulchre, which must soon open to receive us, evidences a support more than human.

The presence of a Covenant God can then alone administer consolation, and enable the expiring saint, to stretch the wing of faith beyond the narrow boundaries of time, and to hasten with feelings of lively anticipation that glorious period, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the now "vile body fashioned like unto the glorified body of Jesus."

Thus supported by the presence of the Saviour, my departed friend exclaimed, in the immediate prospect of death, "my soul is in haste to be gone, I cannot, I would not stay here. Oh, that the happy hour would more quickly arrive, when my immortal spirit, now imprisoned in a body of corruption, shall wing its flight to the throne of God! I long to fly away; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Memory derives a melancholy pleasure, when reflecting on thy holy and devoted life, thy pious and chastened temper, feeling assured that thy liberated spirit, which was once incarcerated in clay, can never again taste this bitter cup of affliction: yes, my friend, thou art now doubtless uniting with an innumerable company, in "ascribing glory and honour to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever." Thou didst, in thy sojourn here, experience the deepness

of affliction, and thy Father's hand was laid heavily on thee; but thou art now removed to an infinite distance from sorrow and disappointment, thy warfare is past, thy sufferings are ended; but far more, thy glorified spirit is for ever released from sin! It is that which swells in more exalted strains the harps of angelic choirs. O, to be emancipated from corruption, to join in singing the praises of the Lamb that was slain, and to sit down at the marriage supper of Jesus, our elder brother! The seraphic Milton beautifully sets forth the sinless enjoyment of the beatified saints:

> Then shall thy saints, unmixed and from the impure
> Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
> Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
> Hymns of high praise. . . . . .

The mind is lost when the world endeavours to pourtray the glories of heaven: but is it not delightful, if we only contrast it with earth, to reflect, that there we shall no more be subject to care and vicissitude, weariness, fatigue, or dejection—that our spiritual capacity shall no longer be clouded or weighed down by the pressure of these vile bodies—that our spirits shall neither tire nor faint in the service of Jesus—but with realizing views of that blessed land whose distant prospect seems near by faith, to delight our eyes; we shall hymn with increasing melody the praises of God!

Surely there will be degrees of bliss even in heaven; for although every vessel shall be full in the presence of Jesus, yet is it not stated in God's holy word, that one star shall differ from another star in glory; and is it not reasonable also to conclude that the child of God who has been privileged to lean on the bosom of the Saviour, and to enjoy the frequent and the peculiar manifestations

of his favour while on earth, would re-echo the praises of that loved name in the realms of bliss, with a voice more sweetly and powerfully attuned, than he who (though equally safe) had received the pardon of his sins, like the dying thief, but just previous to his admission into Paradise? Whether it be so or not, enough is recorded to prove that there will be a fulness of enjoyment, and this assurance may well excite our warmest desires.

The removal of those friends on whose faithfulness, and untiring affection, we were wont to recline, is designed by our heavenly Father, to teach us some important lessons; and among others, the withering nature of earthly happiness: for so prone are we to evil, that we sometimes idolize the gifts of an indulgent God, regardless of the almighty and bountiful dispenser, who thus in mercy casts a veil of sorrows over those enjoyments which, had he allowed to remain unclouded, would have weaned us from himself; and bids the bitter tears of deeply wounded feeling to flow in much love to our souls, that the disappointments we experience below, may loosen our hold on creature comforts, and beget a willingness to flee away and be at rest.

"As those we love decay, we die in part;
String after string is sever'd from the heart,
Till loosen'd life, at last but breathing clay,
Without one pang is glad to fall away.
Unhappy he who latest feels the blow,
Whose eyes have wept o'er every friend laid low;
Dragg'd, lingering on, from partial death to death,
Till, dying, all he can resign is breath."

Like as the Egyptians drew heavily, their chariot-wheels being removed; so, through the pressure of affliction, the Lord graciously leads his

people to become weary of the world, that they may cling more closely to the cross of Jesus; and though the wound which infinite love sees needful to inflict, be too deep for human sympathy to heal, yet if it be sanctified to our souls, and we are thereby led to think more of that God whose unerring wisdom appointed the blow; we may well adopt the language of the pious Young, and with feelings like him exclaim,

"Amid my list of blessings infinite,
Stand this the foremost, 'that my heart has bled.'"

And in reference to the departed, who lived and died in the Lord; how should the consideration of their superior happiness check the mournful sigh! Those dying strains whose chords yet vibrate on the survivor's ear, awakening all those feelings, around which memory still hovers with fond delight, are now exchanged for notes unmingled with woe; nor would we wish (were it possible) for one moment, "to constrain the liberated spirit into bonds again." Rather let the thought of meeting our departed friends in glory, and the assurance that ere long it will be our turn to endure the struggles of dissolving nature, stimulate us to increased watchfulness and prayer in our Christian course: for as we are led to cultivate communion with Jesus on earth, and to live very near his footstool, with a mind deadened to the world, and thoughts frequently exercised on eternal realities; in that proportion will death be disarmed of his sting, and appear rather as an angel of light commissioned by the Father of spirits to convey our souls to glory.

And in order to promote our advancement in holiness, let us constantly cherish all those feelings

which tend very highly to exalt the Saviour, in the dignity of his person, and in the preciousness of his offices, as Christ Mediator to his people. May we be led to meditate much on his finished work; and by an appropriating faith, be enabled to realize in our happy experience, that he has for us completed the work which the eternal Father gave him to do; that nothing shall be able to separate us from his love, and that although sin may be permitted to assault us even till we arrive in glory, it shall never finally prevail against us; yet a few more revolving suns, and if interested in Jesus, we shall bid a final adieu to sorrow and temptation, and become inhabitants of those mansions which the dear Redeemer promised to prepare for all his blood-bought family.

It is indeed sweet, when the mind is rightly attuned, to reflect on the love which induced the Saviour to leave the realms of glory, and dwell in this our wretched world; but more especially that he should condescend to assume our nature, and tabernacle in clay: Ah! had he not participated in the groans of humanity, and experienced all the agonies which our nature is capable of sustaining (sin excepted), he would not, perhaps, have been touched as he now is with a feeling of his people's infirmities; it therefore "became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons and daughters to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

If it be so sweet to think on the love of Jesus below, what shall we feel when admitted to his presence in glory? and if we delight to sound his praises on earth, how shall we rejoice when our tremulous voice, now checked by frequent sighs, shall be aided by celestial harps; and

the feeble accents of redeeming love, be strengthened by the chorus of the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven! This is indeed "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

Holy Spirit, attune my heart to sing the praises of a dear Redeemer, while I sojourn in this vale of tears; enkindle a flame of holy zeal and love in my languid affections: may the fire of devotion burn more brightly on the altar of sweet and intimate communion with Jesus; that my service below may be but a prelude to that sublimer worship above, which admits of no interruption; but which will be perpetuated throughout the ages of a ceaseless eternity.

CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.

FUNERAL HYMN.

He has gone to his God; he has gone to his home,
No more amid peril and error to roam;
His eyes are no longer dim;
His feet will no more falter;
No grief can follow him;
No pang his cheek can alter.

There are paleness, and weeping, and sighs below;
For our faith is faint, and our tears will flow;
But the harps of heaven are ringing,
Glad angels come to greet him;
And hymns of joy are singing,
While old friends press to meet him.

O honoured, beloved, to earth unconfined,
Thou hast soared on high; thou hast left us behind.

But our parting is not for ever;
We will follow thee by heaven's light,
Where the grave cannot dissever
The souls whom God will unite.

Yes, visions of his future rest
To man, the pilgrim, here are shown;
Deep love, pure friendship, thrill his breast,
And hopes rush in of joys unknown.

Released from earth's dull round of cares,
The aspiring soul her vigour tries;
Plumes her soiled pinions, and prepares
To soar amid ethereal skies.

Around us float, in changing light,
The dazzling forms of distant years;
And earth becomes a glorious sight,
Beyond which opening heaven appears.

ANONYMOUS.

ON DEATH.

No, my beloved reader! this world cannot, it was never designed by Providence that this world should afford any source or promise of happiness equal to what the prospect of immortality, and the hopes of the Christian stretching into eternity, hold out to us even in this world. In this prospect alone, we are to look for those powerful restraints that are equal to control the unruly wills of men, and to bridle the tumultuous and disorderly passions that destroy the public peace, and embitter all the enjoyments of the private domestic circle. In these hopes alone we are to look for those correctives which, by chastening our pleasures and

enjoyments, and restraining them within the bounds of virtue, innocence, and right, keep every thing in its own place, preserve order, and harmony, and concord in the society to which we hold, and secure the peace of the individual with others and with himself:—with others by his rectitude and integrity of conduct; by the spirit of universal benevolence he habitually breathes; by his blameless, inoffensive deportment and manners; and with himself, by his having no experience of the fatal consequences of vicious habits, early and long indulged; by feeling no stings of conscience to embitter his days.

Sorrow and pain and suffering are the earthly portion of man. He is born to them *as the sparks fly upwards.* There is nothing more regular or uniform in the course of nature than their progress and operation in every stage of his life. Where, but in the great truths which I have been unfolding to you;—where, but in the reflections they suggest;—where, but in the views they open to us;—can we look for any permanent support under this burden of universal, unavoidable misery, as it presses on the whole race of man; or as it weighs down every individual, bearing the proportion that falls to his own lot?

It is true, that neither these truths, nor the reflections they suggest, nor the views they open to us, can exempt us from the condition of our nature. They will not secure us against sufferings and calamities; we must all bear our cross. But they will strengthen us for the trial; they will take from misery its bitterness; they will strip affliction of its sting. They will tell the Christian that every period of his distress will issue in eternal happiness, and that *what he sows in tears he will in due*

season reap in joy. Does he pine in poverty? Does he earn his scanty bread by the sweat of his brow? They teach, and they assist him to bear with patient resignation, the condition of his mortal lot, in humble submission to the will of the Sovereign Disposer of all things, and in the certain expectation of the happiness which he deserves for *the poor in spirit* in that kingdom, where *rich and poor shall meet together* before him, and he will show himself to be their common Father.

Has he suffered any of those signal reverses of fortune, common to all men in all times, but more particularly to be expected in this age of strange revolutions, that suddenly reduce the most flourishing and opulent to the extreme of want and wretchedness? From the truths we have been contemplating he learns that he has only been stripped of transitory advantages, in which it was never designed that he should have any secure or permanent inheritance. Beyond this vale of tears, they instruct him to look for other possessions which no revolutions of this world can affect, no injustice seize, no violence wrest from him.

Does he suffer in the afflictions of others? Does he weep by the bed of sickness, and witness the last agonies of a revered parent or a beloved child? Or does he hang over the long loved partner of all his joys and all his sorrows, languishing in pain, and waiting the stroke that is to tear up all his affections, and leave him, henceforward, to drain the dregs of life in unblessed singleness and solitude? Through the same paths of pain and suffering, these truths will teach him that he must himself soon follow to where those objects of his love are only *gone before*, and where he will sit down with them in the blessed society of the peo-

ple of God; there, where no painful sympathies will ever wound their affections; no anguish of separation ever interrupt their mutual enjoyment; there, where *death shall be no more, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things shall be done away.*

And when the trial is brought home to himself, when the hour is come in which his mortal frame sinks under the pressure of age, of disease, and nature exhausted warns him that his dissolution is near; even that hour, so appalling in its approaches to the unbelieving and to the man of guilt, comes to him stripped of its chief terrors. Through *the valley of the shadow of death*, to which it leads him, a ray of light beams from the Gospel as the *dawning* of the *eternal day;* and over *that land of darkness as of darkness itself, and without order*, all is bright, and serene, and calm, and the promise of endless rest, and peace, and bliss beyond. As the outer man decayeth, he is strengthened in the inner man. As every earthly object fades gradually from his sight, faith brings in nearer view to his hopes that heavenly seat, where, *seeing even as he is seen*, there will be no more exercise for his faith, and where his hopes will be superseded by enjoyment. His ears are closing to every voice, in which, through each endearing interchange of affection, his youth and his age took delight; but still he hears the voice of him who *poured out his soul unto death, that he through him might live*, assuring him of that glorious termination to all his sufferings, to which he himself led the way: *I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live.* The trust he had ever reposed in this his Saviour and his God strengthens, as he feels the moment approach-

ing when he is to stand before him; and the words of the holy Job, anticipating that blissful moment, are the last that tremble on his livid and convulsive lips—*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.* Change this for the language of infidelity, you who have brutified your soul into a persuasion that the dying words of man are but the last sounds of a piece of mechanism falling to pieces; but leave us to *die the death of the righteous, and to have our latter end like unto theirs.*

BISHOP O'BEIRNE.

THE KNELL.

A SILVERY tone was on the summer air,—
But yet it was not music. The sweet birds
Were warbling wildly forth from grove and dell,
Their thrilling melodies,—yet this low tone
Chimed not with them. But in the secret soul
It claim'd a deep response,—for well I knew
The grave's prelusive melody.—I rose,
And sought the house of mourning.
Ah, pale friend!
Who speak'st not—look'st not—dost not give the hand,—
Hath love so perished in that marble breast,
Once its own soil?—Thou silent, changeless one!
The seal is on thy virtues—now no more
Like ours to waver in temptation's hour,—
Perchance to fall. Fear hath no more a power
To chill thy life-stream, and frail hope doth fold
Her rainbow wing, and sink to rest with thee.

'T is good to be unclothed, and sleep in peace.
Friend!—Friend!—I would not lose thee! Thou
hast been
The sharer in my sympathies,—the soul
That prompted me to good,—the hand that shed
Dew on my budding virtues. In the scenes
Where we have dwelt or wandered—I am now
But a divided being. None are left
To love as thou hast loved.
—But yet, to share
A few more welcomes from thy soft, blue eye,
A few more pressures of thy snowy hand
And ruby lip, I would not bind thee here
To all that power and plenitude of ill
Which we inherit.—Hence, thou selfish grief!—
Thy root is in the earth, and all thy fruits
Bitter and baneful. *Holy joy* should spring
When our co-heirs of immortality
Assume their glorious portion. Go, beloved!—
First, for thou wert most worthy.—I will strive
As best such frail one may,—to follow thee.

ANONYMOUS.

THE FAREWELL TO THE DEAD.

No bitter tears for thee to shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed one!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blush'd into dawn, and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub soul and form,
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower
That never felt a storm!

The sunbeam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That heaven benignly call'd thee hence,
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence:
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art pass'd, with all thy loveliness!

Oh! hadst thou still on earth remain'd,
Vision of beauty! fair, as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stain'd
With passion or with grief!
Now not a sullying breath can rise,
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,
No sculptured image there shall mourn;
Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorn'd with Nature's brightest wreath,
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe;
And oft, upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit! visit our repose,
And bear from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes!
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine, to messenger of Heaven?

MRS. HEMANS.

TO A FRIEND ON THE LOSS OF HIS CHILD.

Not every bud that grows
  Shall bloom into a flower;
Not every hope that glows
  Shall have its prospering hour.
A blight the bud may sever,
The hope be quench'd for ever.

In every joy there lurks
  An impulse of decay,
With silent speed it works,
  While all without is gay;
Ere yet we dream of ruin,
The breach is past renewing.

Yet, like the bending bough
  From some dead weight released,
The spirits bound, we know not how,
  When woe's first press hath ceased;
But this may ne'er be spoken
Of heart or bough that 's broken.

There is a pulse in man
  That will not throb to grief;
Let woe do all it can,
  That pulse will bring relief;
We feel, though self-accusing,
That pulse its balm diffusing.

Since human hopes are vain,
  And joy remaineth not,
'T is well that human pain,
  When dealt, is thus forgot.
The smile shall leave no traces;
  The tear itself effaces.

Then, if apart from all,
  Thou still indulge the tear
Too early doom'd to fall
  Warm on thine infant's bier,
War not with nature's sorrow,
For peace will come to-morrow.

Or should reviving peace
  E'en now be kindly given,
Oh! suffer woe to cease,
  And thank indulgent Heaven,
That breathes the breath of healing
On wounds of deepest feeling.

ANONYMOUS.

THE SEPULCHRE.

"But how do think of what the living know not,
And the dead cannot, or else may not tell!
What art thou? oh! thou great mysterious power."
Hughes.

THERE Manhood lies! Lift up the pall.
  How like the tree struck down to earth
In its green pride, the mighty fall,
  Whom life hath flatter'd with its worth!
Life is a voyage to our graves;
Its promises, like smiling waves,
Invite us onward o'er a sea,
Where all is hidden treachery.

What statued beauty slumbers there!
  But mark those flowers, pale as the brow
Which they have wreath'd; if Death could spare
  A victim, he had pitied now.

To-day she hoped to be a bride—
To-day, 't was told, her lover died!
Here death has revell'd in his power,
The riot of life's fairest hour!

Look on that little cherub's face,
Whose budding smile is fix'd by death:
How short indeed has been its race!
A cloud sail'd by the sun, a breath
Did gently creep across a bed
Of flowers—its spirit then had fled.
A morning star, a moment bright,
Then melting into heaven's own light.

Behold that picture of decay,
Where nature, wearied, sank to rest!
Full fourscore years have pass'd away,
Yet did he, like a lingering guest,
Go from life's banquet with a sigh,
That he, alas! *so soon* should die.
Our youth has not desires so vain,
As creep into an age of pain.

But there how mournfully serene,
That childless widow'd mother's look!
To her the world a waste has been,
One whom it pitied, yet forsook.
Calm as the moon's light, which no storm
Raging beneath it can deform,
Did her afflicted spirit shine,
Above her earthly woes divine.

Thus death deals with mortality,
Like flowers, some gather'd in their prime,
Others, when scarcely said to be,
Just number'd with the things of time:

With life worn out some grieve to die,
To end their griefs here others fly.
Life is but that which woke it, breath—
Look here, and tell me, what is death?

ANONYMOUS.

THE FIRST GRAVE.

The following pathetic little poem was written on the circumstance of the first grave being formed in the churchyard of the new church at Brompton: the place was recently a garden, and some of the flowers yet show themselves among the grass, where this one tenant, the forerunner of its population, has taken up his last abode.

A SINGLE grave!—the only one
In this unbroken ground,
Where yet the garden leaf and flower
Are lingering around.

A single grave!—my heart has felt
How utterly alone
In crowded halls, where breathed for me
Not one familiar tone;

The shade where forest-trees shut out
All but the distant sky;—
I 've felt the loneliness of night
When the dark winds past by;

My pulse has quickened with its awe,
My lip has gasped for breath;
But what were they to such as this—
The solitude of death!

A single grave!—we half forget
How sunder human ties,
When round the silent place of rest
A gathered kindred lies.

We stand beneath the haunted yew,
And watch each quiet tomb;
And in the ancient churchyard feel
Solemnity, not gloom:

The place is purified with hope,
The hope that is of prayer;
And human love, and heavenward thought,
And pious faith, are there.

The wild flowers spring amid the grass;
And many a stone appears,
Carved by affection's memory,
Wet with affection's tears.

The golden chord which binds us all
Is loosed, not rent in twain;
And love, and hope, and fear unite
To bring the past again.

But *this* grave is so desolate,
With no remembering stone,
No fellow-graves for sympathy—
'T is utterly alone.

I do not know who sleeps beneath,
His history or name—
Whether if, lonely in his life,
He is in death the same:

Whether de died unloved, unmourned,
The last leaf on the bough;
Or if some desolated hearth
Is weeping for him now.

Perhaps this is too fanciful:
Though single be his sod,
Yet not the less it has around
The presence of his God.

It may be weakness of the heart,
But yet its kindliest, best;
Better if in our selfish world
It could be less repress.

Those gentler charities which draw
Man closer with his kind—
Those sweet humanities which make
The music which they find.

How many a bitter word 'twould hush—
How many a pang 'twould save,
If life more precious held those ties
Which sanctify the grave!

L. E. L.

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

The importance of an event cannot be accurately estimated by the degree of interest which it immediately excites, or the magnitude of the consequences which it immediately produces. Events, which, on their occurrence, excited deep and general interest, and seemed big with the fate of many nations and generations, have sometimes failed of producing any important or permanent result. They have passed by, and are forgotten; or, if remembered at all, the recollection is accompanied by a sentiment of wonder, that incidents so trivial should ever have attracted so much regard. On the other hand, the most extensive and lasting revolutions in human affairs, have often flowed from incidents obscure in their origin, casual in their occurrence, and apparently trifling in their importance. There is not to be found, in the history of the human race, from the commencement of time to the present moment, an instance in which the

apparent insignificance of an event was more strongly contrasted by its real importance than the death of the Lord Jesus.

In this event, if we look merely at its external circumstances, there is nothing to merit record, or to secure remembrance. Man's giving up the ghost, is an event of daily, of hourly recurrence. There was indeed something peculiar in this case, for Jesus died upon a cross. But is there any thing uncommonly interesting in the fact, that a poor and unfriended person, accused by his countrymen of violating the law of their fathers, should fall a victim to their hatred, and expiate his supposed crimes by crucifixion? The severity of his punishment might indeed be supposed likely to excite some degree of sympathy in the spectators; but certainly the probability was, that his life and death, his guilt or his innocence, would soon cease to be an object of interest, and that every vestige of his existence would, in the course of a very few years, perish from the earth.

Yet, this event, so apparently trivial and inconsiderable, formed the grand and concluding feature in a scene the most interesting and important which ever was, which ever will be, which ever can be exhibited on earth. Amid apparent meanness there was real grandeur; amid seeming insignificance there was infinite importance. That Jesus, who on the cross yielded up his spirit, was the only begotten Son of God in human nature. That life, which he there voluntarily laid down, was the ransom of men innumerable; heaven, earth, and hell, felt the Saviour's dying groan. From that event consequences infinitely numerous, immensely important, and unspeakably interesting, have flowed; revolutions in this world, deeply

affecting the present and immortal interests of mankind have been its result; while among its consequences in the invisible state, faith beholds a guilty world restored to the favour of its Creator; the rights of the divine government vindicated, the everlasting covenant ratified; and the gates of paradise set open.

While thrones, the most ancient and stable, have been crumbled into dust, and their proud possessors forgotten among men; while the renown of the warrior and the statesman, the philosopher and the poet, has passed away; the death of Jesus on a cross is not merely remembered, but remembered with the deepest interest, and the most profound veneration. And now, at the distance of nearly two thousand years since this decease was accomplished in Palestine, we, the inhabitants of a remote district in a distant part of the earth, meet together to celebrate a religious rite instituted for its commemoration; and thus testify our sense of its importance, and our wish that it may be held in everlasting remembrance.

BROWN.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THIS is the most remarkable miracle in the Gospel. Peruse the history with care; and you must conclude, either that he rose, or that his disciples stole the body away. The more the last is considered, the more improbable it appears. Jesus had declared, that he would rise again on the third day. The heads of the Jewish nation knew this, and determined to prevent any craft or force being employed by his followers, to take the body from the tomb, and then pretend that he was

risen. A stone is rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre; a seal is fixed upon it, and a guard of Roman soldiers set. Will the timid disciples, who ran away when their master was seized, now attack a band of armed men; or could they hope to carry off the body secretly? what is more improbable? Besides, if they had reason to think their master had deceived them, and filled their minds with false expectations; instead of running any risk to get the body into their possession, they would rather have renounced all connexion with him for ever. Had they even stolen away the body, as was said, that would have entirely cooled the ardour of their affection, and have banished the enthusiasm of love from their breasts, never to return. But their future lives, by the ardent fervour of their affectionate zeal, still more strongly confute the supposition.

It is evident the body is gone. The Apostles describe the resurrection of their Master; and assert, that he appeared to them on the very day he rose, and frequently afterwards. Read the soldiers' account, Matt. xxviii. Observe the conduct of the Rulers. Why do they not order the Apostles to be seized? Why do they not command the soldiers to be punished? Why do they not bring the whole to a judicial determination? Why is this neglect in men who had been so anxious to have a guard placed on the sepulchre? On the supposition of the resurrection of Jesus, the whole is natural and easy; on a supposition, that the disciples came and stole the body away, every thing is inexplicable.

BOGUE.

DEATH A BLESSING.

THE death of a believer has been useful. It has encouraged and established those who were walking in the way to Zion, with many a trembling step, and many a shivering fear how it would go with them at last. When they have viewed a dying Christian, and have seen the grace of God, they have been glad; their courage has been revived, and they have rejoiced in hope. Why may it not be so with me? After turning their backs on a sermon, the careless have been convinced by a dying bed. There the evidence was too plain to be denied, too solemn to be ridiculed. The death of the saint has proved the life of the sinner.

The death of a parent has been useful. His expiring charge has never been forgotten. The thought of separation for ever from one so loved and valued, has awakened in the son a salutary fear. Returning from a father's grave, he has met with God, saying, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father! thou art the guide of my youth?" And the death of the parent has proved the life of the child.

The death of a minister has been useful. Some of the servants of God have laboured faithfully, without seeing the fruit of their labours. One has sown, and another has reaped; the servant of God has been but little regarded while living; but when dead, his word has recurred with power to the conscience; his addresses, prayers, and tears, have been remembered by the people; and the expectation of meeting him at the last day, has forced them to exclaim, How shall we escape! And the death of the minister has proved the life of the hearer.

The death of the martyr has been useful. His patience and fortitude; his joy and triumph; his forgiveness of injuries, and his prayers for his persecutors, have struck beholders, rendered a religion honourable that could produce such marvellous effects, led to an examination of its evidences; and faith and zeal have been the result of inquiry. The wrath of man has praised God,—and the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the church.

But where are we now? We have an example to produce infinitely greater than all these. Let us leave the disciples and behold their Lord. Jesus died; and his death is the life of the world. "I, if I be lifted up," said he, "will draw all men unto me."

JAY.

THOUGHT IN A GRAVE-YARD.

How happy are the dead, who quietly rest
Beneath these stones! each by his kindred laid
Still in a hallow'd neighbourship with those
Who when alive his social converse shared:
And now perhaps some dear surviving friend
Doth here at times the grateful visit pay,
Read with sad eyes his short memorial o'er,
And bless his memory still!

MISS BAILLIE.

THE VALE OF TEARS.

"In visions which are not of night, a shadowy vale I see,
The path of pilgrim tribes who are, who have been, or shall be;

At either end are lowering clouds impervious to the sight,
And frequent shadows veil, throughout, each gleam of passing light;
A path it is of joys and griefs, of many hopes and fears;
Gladden'd at times by sunny smiles, but oftener dimm'd by tears.

Green leaves are there, they quickly fade—bright flowers, but soon they die;
Its banks are laved by pleasant streams, but soon their bed is dry;
And some that roll on to the last with undiminished force,
Have lost that limpid purity which graced their early source;
They seem to borrow in their flow the tinge of dark'ning years,
And e'en their mournful murm'ring sound befits the vale of tears.

Pleasant that valley's opening scenes appear to childhood's view,
The flowers are bright, the turf is green, the sky above is blue;
A blast may blight, a beam may scorch, a cloud may intervene,
But lightly marked, and soon forgot, they mar not such a scene;
Fancy still paints the future bright, and hope the present cheers,
Nor can we deem the path we tread leads through a vale of tears.

But soon, too soon, the flowers that deck'd our early path-way side
Have droop'd and wither'd on their stalks, and one by one have died;
The turf by noon's fierce heat is sear'd, the sky is overcast,
There 's thunder in the torrent's tone, and tempest in the blast;
Fancy is but a phantom found, and hope a dream appears,
And more and more our hearts confess this life a vale of tears.

Darker and darker seems the path! how sad to journey on,
When hands and hearts which gladden'd ours appear for ever gone,
Some cold in death, and some, alas! we fancied could not chill,
Living to self and to the world, to us seem colder still;
With mournful retrospective glance we look to brighter years,
And tread with solitary steps the thorny vale of tears.

Then wasting pain and slow disease trace furrows on the brow,
The grasshopper, alighting down, is felt a burthen now,
The silver cord is loosening fast its feeble, slender hold,
The fountain's pitcher soon must break, and bowl of purer gold;—

Oh! were it not for that blest hope which even
death endears,
How weary were our pilgrimage through this dark
vale of tears!

ANONYMOUS.

MAN CONSTANTLY DYING.

THERE is no point of life which we divide not with death; so as, if well considered, we live but only one point, and have not life but for the present instant. Our years past are now vanished, and we enjoy no more of them than if we were already dead; the years to come we live not, and possess no more of them, than if we were not yet born. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow we know not what shall be; of to-day many hours are past, and we live them not; others are to come, and whether we shall live them or not is uncertain; so that we live but this present moment, and in this also we are dying.

Life is given to us by pieces, and mingles as many parts of death as there are of life; the age of infancy dies, when we enter into that of childhood; and that of childhood, when we become youths; that of youth when we come to the age of manhood; that, when we are old; and even old age itself expires, when we become decrepit; so that during the same life we find many deaths, and yet can hardly persuade ourselves that we shall die once.

As death is the total change of life, every change is the death of some part; sickness is the death of health; sleeping, of waking; sorrow, of joy;

impatience, of quiet; youth, of infancy; age, of youth. All things which follow time, and even time itself, at last, must die.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

REFLECTIONS ON THE MORTALITY OF MAN.

THE frail and precarious condition of man is demonstrated by proofs which can neither be denied nor mistaken. No one requires an accumulation of arguments, to convince him that he must one day die; the fact is on all hands admitted; but the great point is to have the mind duly impressed with it. Oh! how soon are the most striking events and solemn admonitions forgotten! The excitement which is produced in us, however strong, is for the most part transient and momentary. A strange sort of delusion seizes and stupifies the mind, and it settles down again upon the lees of earth and carnality. Hence, in the Holy Scriptures, the same searching appeals on death and eternity are so often repeated. Hence the most vivid and affecting descriptions of the shortness of our continuance here, and of the infirmity and sorrow which enter into the lot of our present pilgrimage. But some may ask, Are three-score years and ten, the ordinary term of human life, to be called a short period? I answer, Certainly it is, when compared to eternity. The life even of Methuselah was but, to endless duration, what a drop of water is to the ocean, or an atom to the universe. In the flush of youth, while fancy forms a thousand flattering pictures, and sports amidst the delights of sense and sin, this representation is wholly disregarded. Time then seems slow in its

movement; and life presents a vast and varied field, illumined with all the gay visions of hope and happiness. But the gray-headed senior, who is just finishing his mortal race, has widely different views. With him the enchantments of a delusive imagination have successively vanished away, in the progress of sober experience. The similes and figures used in Scripture, to set forth the rapidity and shortness of life, are remarkably apt and striking. It is a tale, a dream, a flower, a flood, a vapour. These are objects with which we are all familiar; but how few, alas! receive the monitory lessons they teach! The tale is soon told; the dream, with which we are tumultuously occupied, vanishes with the morning light, and not a fragment or trace remains; the flower opens its rich tints to the sun, but even in its bloom begins to fade, and shrink, and wither; the flood, caused by a tempest, rolls down the mountain-channel, and is swallowed up in the sea; the vapour gilds with gold and purple the evening sky, but while we gaze and admire, melts and disappears. And why is human life so short and full of trouble? Why does God deface and destroy the work of his own hands? Whence this dire displeasure of the Almighty, which has swept away so many generations of our race, and has everywhere suspended signs and tokens of mourning, lamentation, and woe? "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Here the mystic veil is pierced—the cause of human frailty and suffering is disclosed.

"The same rash hand,
That pluck'd in evil hour the fatal fruit,
Unbarr'd the gates of hell, and let loose sin,
And death, and all the family of pain,
To prey upon mankind."

The view of our frail and dying condition gives rise to many serious and important reflections.

1. If the time of our continuance here is so short, and so speedily gone, how wretched is their state, whose hopes and hearts are confined to the things of earth! The men of the world, said David, have their portion in this life. And what a poor, uncertain, and unsatisfying portion is it, even at the best! They toil to heap up riches, and know not who shall gather them; riches which profit not in the day of wrath, because they can neither assuage the anguish of disease, nor bribe the King of terrors. Some walk in a vain show of pomp and power, and, girt with a little brief authority, are for a season the objects of admiration and envy; while others pursue the chase of pleasure—crying with restless solicitude, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewith shall we be clothed?" But misery lurks under the garniture of splendour, and walks in the rounds of amusement and gaiety. The mere men of the world are subject to a thousand disappointments, in regard to those things on which their hearts are most passionately set. Thorns of vexation pierce them, while plucking their roses; bitters are dashed with all their sweets; and pangs, latent pangs, follow all their pleasures. Many have honestly acknowledged this; and those who deny it in words, give proof of it by their actions.

But let us suppose the worldling to be successful up to the very point of his most sanguine expectations and wishes. Let him wade in wealth, and soar in fame, and revel in luxury. Is he now happy? No; for he sees,—and cannot shun the sight,—the ghastly spectre of death rapidly approaching, with a warrant from the King of kings

to summon him away, and seize him in that cold hard hand, whose grasp is irresistible. Every tolling bell, every passing funeral, tells him that the end of his race is near; every pain and disease in his body, every hidden sting and dark surmise in his soul, tells him that his triumph will be short. The more any one possesses of earthly enjoyment, the more gloomy and horrible must be the sight of the grave, if there be no hope beyond it. Just when he is beginning to say to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" his conscience hears a voice from heaven exclaim, "Thou fool! this night thy soul is required; and now whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Wretched then, beyond conception wretched, is their condition, whose hearts and hopes are glued to earth.

2. If the time of our continuance here is so short, and speedily gone, how necessary is it to seek a better inheritance beyond the grave.

Had we been left to the bare dictates of reason, or the vague notions of tradition, how much perplexity would have agitated and harassed our minds! But Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. We are sure that all must feel an eternal weight of misery, or possess an eternal weight of glory, in the world to come. How, then, may we attain the final happiness of the saints? In no other way, than by looking to and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. All who have a part in the great salvation, are prepared to enter a better world. They can welcome the event, which makes nature shudder; they can exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin,

and the strength of sin is the law; but, thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." But the portion of joy and felicity, which awaits the righteous, must be desired and sought, before it can be attained. Alas! what multitudes around us never make it a matter of real concern, of serious thought! Their efforts and contrivances are incessantly employed to banish all the apprehensions and fears of futurity. Our Lord exhorts us to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; to labour, not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life. And are not these exhortations reasonable and highly important? Who can expect a place in the kingdom of God, without a title to it, and a fitness for it? Beyond the confines of this world, there are but two dwelling places for the souls of men,—heaven and hell. Heaven is a prepared place, for a prepared people, and the impenitent and unbelieving can have no residence there. Think of this, while the glad tidings of salvation are sounding in your ears; while the glorious Sun of Righteousness is pouring the beams of spiritual day around you. Think of this, ye slaves of Mammon, ye sons and daughters of gaity and dissipation, ye who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. If your days are cut short while you remain in a carnal and unrenewed state, your hope will be cut off for ever.

To the humble and devout, who believe in Christ with all their heart, the king of terrors is transformed into a messenger of peace. Sin is pardoned; and a good hope, through grace, raises and animates the mind. "Death to a good man," says Dr. Watts, "is but passing through a dark entry, out of one little dusky room of his Father's

house, into another that is fair and large, lightsome, and glorious, and divinely entertaining." The pious Doddridge could say in his last hours, "I am full of confidence; and this is my confidence,—there is a hope set before me; I have fled, I still fly, for refuge to that hope. In him I trust; in him I have strong consolation; and shall assuredly be accepted in the Beloved of my soul. The spirit of adoption is given me; and I have no doubt that life and death, and all my present exercises, are directed in mercy by my adored heavenly Father." Oh! how small a matter is the breaking up of the clay tabernacle, if we know that we have "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Happy, thrice happy change, to quit these frail tenements of flesh, that we may be clothed in vestures of celestial, radiance, and enter into the joy of our Lord!

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

ANONYMOUS.

THE BURIAL.

DEPARTED soul, whose poor remains
This hallow'd lowly grave contains;
Whose passing storm of life is o'er,
Whose pains and sorrows are no more;
Bless'd be thou with the bless'd above!
Where all is joy, and purity, and love.

Let HIM, in might and mercy dread,
Lord of the living and the dead;

In whom the stars of heaven rejoice,
And the ocean lifts its voice;
Thy spirit, purified, to glory raise,
To sing with holy saints his everlasting praise!

Departed soul, who in this earthly scene
Hast our lowly sister been,
Swift be thy way to where the blessed dwell!
Until we meet thee there, farewell! farewell!

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE MARCH AND THE END OF LIFE.

'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'
GEN. iii. 19.

"Then shall the dust return to the dust as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.—ECCL. xii. 7.

"How loved, how valued once, avails thee not,—
To whom related, or by whom begot,
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
'T is all *thou* art, and all the *proud* shall be,"
Pope's Miscell.

WE are hastening on—we are hastening on,
To the sleep of the years that are vanish'd and gone,
To the voiceless chambers that lie beneath,—
To the silent halls of darkness and death!
Like the instant flashing,—the fitful light,
Of the passing meteors in their flight;
Like the sunset hues of the summer's eve,
Like the forms that in fancy's loom we weave
Like the flowers that blush at the opening day,
We are blushing and blooming, and fading away.

Through life's checquer'd mazes of joy and woe,
Through the grief and the gloom of this vale below,
With the fair, and the brave, and the proud, and the just,
We are hastening to dust! we are hastening to dust!

Ye beautiful throng of the bright and fair,
With your locks of glossy and golden hair,
With your sparkling eyes, and their rays divine,
That languishing beam, or brilliantly shine;
With your crimson lips, and their coral strain,
As sweet as the wave-utter'd songs of the main,
With your forms that before us and round us sweep,
Like the phantoms that float in the realms of sleep,—
'Midst hope, and joy, and faith, and trust,
Ye are hastening to dust! ye are hastening to dust!

Ye plumed band of the strong and the brave,
With your burnish'd swords, and plumes that wave;
With you banners that stream on the breezes unfurl'd,
And your shouts that frighten the trembling world,
With your battles that burst like a flaming flood,
And pour out their gather'd tides of blood;
With your red cannon's wrath, and war that make
The mountains, the valleys, the oceans quake;
With your bared arms, and your uplifted lance,
And your blacken'd brow, and your fearful glance,
'Midst the sabre's stroke, and the dagger's thrust,
Ye are hastening to dust! ye are hastening to dust!

Ye scoffing tribes of the rich and proud,
With your necks unbent, and your knees unbow'd;

With your minion train of the mean and vile,
That crouch before you, and fawn and smile;
With your spurning foot, and your threatening eye,
That stagger the poor as they pass you by;
With your menacing tones of wrath and pride,
That frighten the fearful who wait at your side;
With your smiles of scorn, and your frowns of hate,
With your robes of gold, and your halls of state,
With all your pomp, and power, and trust,
Ye are hastening to dust! ye are hastening to dust!

Ye lovely train of the humble and meek,
Who wipe the tears from the aged cheek;
Whose voice the gathering cares beguile,
And maketh the hearts of the sad to smile;
With your tears, that stream o'er the chilling bier
Of the pious, that dwell no longer here;
With your smiles that bind up the broken in heart,
And pour in a balm on the poison'd dart;
With your prayers that rise to the throne above,
And bring down the blessings of peace and love;
With the fair, and the brave, and the proud, and the just,
Ye are hastening to dust! ye are hastening to dust!

ANONYMOUS.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

LEAVES have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

Day is for mortal care,
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer,—
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the earth!

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine;
There comes a day for grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine!

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee!—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripen'd bloom to seize their prey!

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,
When Autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain,—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when Spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale?
They have one season—all are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam,
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there!

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest;
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

MRS. HEMANS.

THE FUNERAL.

WERE death a rare and uncommon object, were it only once in the course of a man's life that he beheld one of his fellow-creatures carried to the grave, a solemn awe would fill him; he would stop short in the midst of his pleasures; he would even be chilled with secret horror. Such impressions, however, would prove unsuitable to the nature of our present state. When they became so strong as to render men unfit for the ordinary business of life, they would in a great measure defeat the intention of our being placed in this world. It is better ordered by the wisdom of Providence, that they should be weakened by the frequency of their recurrence; and so tempered by the mixture of other passions, as to allow us to go on freely in acting our parts on earth.

Yet, familiar as death is now become, it ought not to pass over as one of those common incidents which are beheld without concern, and awaken no reflection. There are many things which the funerals of our fellow-creatures are calculated to teach; and happy it were for the gay and dissipated

if they would listen more frequently to the instruction of so awful a moment.—

When we observe the funerals that pass along the streets, or when we walk among the monuments of death, the first thing that naturally strikes us is the undistinguishing blow with which that common enemy levels all. We behold a great promiscuous multitude all carried to the same abode; all lodged in the same dark and silent mansions. There mingle persons of every age and character, of every rank and condition in life: the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the gay and the grave, the renowned and the ignoble. A few weeks ago, most of those whom we have seen carried to the grave, walked about as we do now on the earth; enjoyed their friends, beheld the light of the sun, and were forming designs for future days. Perhaps it is not long since they were engaged in scenes of high festivity. For them, perhaps, the cheerful company assembled; and in the midst of the circle they shone with gay and pleasing vivacity. But now—to them, all is finally closed. To them no more shall the seasons return, or the sun rise; no more shall they hear the voice of mirth, or behold the face of man. They are swept from the universe as though they had never been. They are 'carried away as with a flood: the wind has passed over them, and they are gone.'

While the funeral is attended by a numerous unconcerned company, who are discoursing to one another about the news of the day, or the ordinary affairs of life, let our thoughts rather follow to the house of mourning, and represent to themselves what is going on there. There we should see a disconsolate family, sitting in silent grief, thinking

of the sad breach that is made in their little society; and with tears in their eyes looking to the chamber that is now left vacant, and to every memorial that presents itself of their departed friend. By such attention to the woes of others, the selfish hardness of our hearts will be gradually softened, and melted down into humanity.

BLAIR.

FUNERAL HYMN.

O BEAUTIFUL the streams
That through our valleys run,
Singing and dancing in the gleams
Of summer's cloudless sun.
The sweetest of them all
From its fairy banks is gone;
And the music of the waterfall
Hath left the silent stone!

Up among the mountains
In soft and mossy cell,
By the silent springs and fountains
The happy wild-flowers dwell.
The queen-rose of the wilderness
Hath wither'd in the wind,
And the shepherds see no loveliness
In the blossoms left behind.

Birds cheer our lonely groves
With many a beauteous wing;
When happy in their harmless loves
How tenderly they sing!
O'er all the rest was heard
One wild and mournful strain,
But hush'd is the voice of that hymning bird,
She ne'er must sing again!

Bright through the yew-tree's gloom
I saw a sleeping dove!
On the silence of her silvery plume,
The sunlight lay in love:
The grove seem'd all her own
Round the beauty of that breast,
But the startled dove afar is flown!
Forsaken is her nest!

In yonder forest wide
A flock of wild deer lies,
Beauty breathes o'er each tender side,
And shades their peaceful eyes!
The hunter in the night
Hath singled out the doe,
In whose light the mountain flock lay bright,
Whose hue was like the snow!

A thousand stars shine forth
With pure and dewy ray,
Till by night the mountains of our north
Seem gladdening in the day.
O, empty all the heaven!
Though a thousand lights be there,—
For clouds o'er the evening star are driven,
And shorn her golden hair!

What! though the stream be dead,—
Its banks all still and dry!
It murmureth now o'er a lovelier bed
In the air-groves of the sky.
What! though our prayers from death
The queen-rose might not save!
With brighter bloom and balmier breath
She springeth from the grave.

What! though our bird of light
Lie mute with plumage dim!
In heaven I see her glancing bright—
I hear her angel hymn.
What! though the dark tree smile
No more—with our dove's calm sleep,
She folds her wing on a sunny isle
In heaven's untroubled deep.

True that our beauteous doe
Hath left her still retreat,—
But purer now in heavenly snow
She lies at Jesus' feet.
O star! untimely set,
Why should we weep for thee?
Thy bright and dewy coronet
Is rising o'er the sea!

PROF. WILSON.

THE FAREWELL TO THE DEAD.

COME near!—ere yet the dust
Soil the bright paleness of the settled brow,
Look on your brother, and embrace him now
In still and solemn trust!
Come near! once more let kindred lips be press'd
On his cold cheek, then bear him to his rest.

Look yet on this young face!
What shall the beauty from amongst us gone,
Leave of its image e'en where most it shone,
Gladdening its hearth and race?
Dim grows the semblance, on man's thought impress'd;
Come near, and bear the beautiful to rest.

Ye weep, and all is well!
For tears befit earth's partings!—Yesterday
Song was upon the lips of this pale clay,
And sunshine seem'd to dwell
Where'er he moved—the welcomed and the bless'd!
Now gaze, and bear the silent to his rest.

Look yet on him, whose eye
Meets yours no more, in sadness or in mirth!
Was he not fair amongst the sons of earth,
The beings born to die?
But not where death has power, may love be bless'd!
—Come near, and bear ye the beloved to rest.

How may the mother's heart
Dwell on her son, and dare to hope again?
The spring's rich promise hath been given in vain,
The lovely must depart!
Is *he* not gone, our brightest and our best?
—Come near! and bear the early-call'd to rest.

Look on him! is he laid
To slumber from the harvest or the chase?
—Too still and sad the smile upon his face,
Yet that, e'en that must fade!
Death will not hold unchanged his fairest guest,
Come near, and bear the mortal to his rest.

His voice of mirth hath ceased
Amidst the vineyards! there is left no place
For him whose dust receives your last embrace,
At the gay bridal feast!
Earth must take earth to moulder on her breast;
Come near! weep o'er him! bear him to his rest.

Yet mourn ye not as they
Whose spirit's light is quench'd—for him the past
Is seal'd. He may not fall, he may not cast
His birthright's hope away!
All is not here of our beloved and bless'd,
—Leave ye the sleeper with his God to rest.

MRS. HEMANS.

FOR WHOM SHOULD WE WEEP

"Weep ye not for the dead, neither bewail him."
JER. XXII. 10.

WEEP not for those whose race is run,—
Their prize is gain'd, their toil is past;
To them the power of grief is done,
And misery's storm has frown'd its last!
They sleep in Christ the sleep of peace,
Unflush'd by dreams of earthly sorrow,
Till earthly days and nights shall cease,
Before a bright and glorious morrow!

But weep for those who yet remain,
The feverish weight of life sustaining,
The frown of scorn, the sting of pain,
And secret anguish uncomplaining:
Weep for the living—they who rest
Within their last and happiest dwelling,
Are senseless of the vain bequest
Of tears, and sighs, successive swelling.

Weep o'er the cradle—not the tomb!
Lament the dawn, and not the ending,
Of that tempestuous day of gloom,
Whose sun is bright *but when descending.*

Weep for the bands who still maintain
The strife with labour undiminish'd;
Departed saints—their death is gain,
Their spoils are reap'd, their conflict finish'd.

ANONYMOUS.

THE TOMB.

A TOMB, as has been justly said, is a monument situated on the confines of both worlds. It at once presents to us the termination of the inquietudes of life, and sets before us the image of eternal rest. 'There,' in the eloquent expressions of Job, 'the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and the great are there; and the servant is free from his master.' It is very remarkable, that in all languages, and among all nations, death has been described in a style of this kind; expressed by figures of speech, which convey everywhere the same idea of rest, or sleep, or retreat from the evils of life. Such a style perfectly agrees with the general belief of the soul's immortality, but assuredly conveys no high idea of the boasted pleasures of the world. It shows how much all mankind have felt this life to be a scene of trouble and care; and have agreed in opinion, that perfect rest is to be expected only in the grave.

BLAIR.

MOTHER, WHAT IS DEATH?

"MOTHER, how still the baby lies!
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes—
They tell me this is death.

My little work I thought to bring,
And sat down by his bed,
And pleasantly I tried to sing—
They hush'd me—he is dead.

They say that he again will rise,
More beautiful than now;
That God will bless him in the skies—
O, mother, tell me how!"

"Daughter, do you remember, dear,
The cold, dark thing you brought,
And laid upon the casement here,—
A wither'd worm, you thought?

I told you that almighty power
Could break that wither'd shell,
And show you, in a future hour,
Something would please you well.

Look at the chrysalis, my love,—
An empty shell it lies;—
Now raise your wandering glance above,
To where yon insect flies!"

"O, yes, mamma! how very gay
Its wings of starry gold!
And see! it lightly flies away
Beyond my gentle hold.

O, mother, now I know full well,
If God that worm can change,
And draw it from this broken cell,
On golden wings to range,—

How beautiful will brother be,
When God shall give *him* wings,
Above this dying world to flee,
And live with heavenly things!"

MRS. GILMAN.

A THOUGHT ON DEATH.

When life as opening buds is sweet,
And golden hopes the fancy greet,
And youth prepares his joys to meet,—
Alas! how hard it is to die!

When just is seized some valued prize,
And duties press, and tender ties
Forbid the soul from earth to rise,—
How awful then it is to die!

When, one by one, those ties are torn,
And friend from friend is snatch'd forlorn,
And man is left alone to mourn,—
Ah then, how easy 'tis to die!

When faith is firm, and conscience clear,
And words of peace the spirit cheer,
And vision'd glories half appear,—
'Tis joy, 'tis triumph then to die.

When trembling limbs refuse their weight,
And films, slow gathering, dim the sight,
And clouds obscure the mental light,—
'T is Nature's precious boon to die.

MRS. BARBAULD.

PASSING AWAY.

"Passing away is written on the world, and all the world contains."

It is written on the rose,
In its glory's full array;
Read what those buds disclose—
"*Passing away.*"

It is written on the skies
Of the soft blue summer day;
It is traced in sunset's dyes—
"Passing away."

It is written on the trees,
As their young leaves glist'ning play;
And on brighter things than these—
"Passing away."

It is written on the brow
Where the spirit's ardent ray
Lives, burns, and triumphs now—
"Passing away."

It is written on the *heart*—
Alas! that *there* decay
Should claim from love a part!
"Passing away."

Friends, friends! oh! shall we meet
Where the spoiler finds no prey
Where lovely things and sweet
Pass not away?

Shall we know each other's eyes,
With the thoughts that in them lay,
When they meet beneath the skies
Which pass away?

Oh! if this may be so,
Speed, speed, thou closing day!
How blest, from earth's vain show,
To pass away.

MRS. HEMANS.

TWO LETTERS OF THE REVEREND LEGH RICHMOND, ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER.

The following letter, addressed by Mr. Richmond to his wife, enables us to supply some information relative to the last moments of his Father; at the same time that it affords a fine illustration of the faith and resignation of his mother. The event here alluded to, occurred at Stockport, in Cheshire, in the year 1806.

"Dearest Mary,—I sent you a few hastily penned lines last night. As soon as I had finished them, I went to our medical friend, from whom I had a regular account of the melancholy event which has brought me here. I had previously written a note that I might be shown into a room with my dear mother alone. I then went with Mary, and found my mother in a most interesting struggle between divine consolation and natural affection. My first words, after an interval of silence, were, 'are you supported, my dear mother?' 'Beyond all hope and expectation,' was the reply. 'Do you feel the consolations of religion?' 'I am resigned to the stroke, though it rends my heart in two. I may weep; but I dare not, will not complain. I never deserved *him*; he was lent to me, and now God has taken him again. You are come to support a poor widowed mother's heart; and I know you will be, what your dear sister Fanny has already been, the prop and strength of my age and affliction.' I was astonished and melted at her fortitude and resignation. I find my dear father's mind for three weeks past, was calm and tranquil, expressive of much faith, patience, and hope. My mother was reading that exquisite commentary of Bishop Horne, on the 23d Psalm,

He observed, at the close of the fourth verse, 'that is heavenly, and it is my comfort.' He then suddenly said, 'my head is giddy,' staggered to the sofa, and fell into my mother's arms; his eyes fixed, and a deadly paleness on his face. She contrived to ring the bell, and instantly returned to him; he gasped for breath, and groaned twice. The servant came in, and lifted up his legs; he gave one more slight struggle, and breathed out his soul in my mother's arms. She sat with him two hours in silent composure; unable to weep, but calm in grief. That night she could not sleep, but gained relief by much weeping. Fanny arrived on Sunday evening, and slept with our dear mother. After I had sat for half an hour yesterday evening, the rest came in, one by one, and we fell into a solemn but tranquil conversation. My very heart was ready to burst; but I concealed my feelings as much as possible. After a while I went to see the body of my father. As we proceeded up stairs, I found my legs tremble, and when I came to the room door, I staggered; but instantly offering up a prayer for strength, felt relieved, and advanced.

"Instead of seeing any thing to inspire terror, I beheld his well-known and honoured countenance so calm, heavenly, mild, and unaltered, that it seemed only like a sweet sleep. I never felt more composed; and we sat three quarters of an hour, chiefly in silent contemplation. I could only now and then interrupt it by, 'Oh! how sweet a countenance!—there is nothing terrible in this! It is the emblem of peace and composure. Oh! my dear father! I could have wished to have closed your eyes!—but God's will be done! With difficulty, I left the room. I went down to supper.

Afterward, I requested all the house to assemble, and read 1 Cor. xv.; and then offered up a solemn and appropriate prayer. Great feeling pervaded us all.

"This morning, at nine o'clock, commenced the business of the funeral. My heart again failed me. I was excessively tried in the procession through the churchyard, and in the church. I was, however, inwardly strengthened, and shed the last tear over his remains.

"On returning to the house, for a moment I fainted, but recovered. Indeed, my dear love, it has been a very trying scene to me. A thousand tender recollections of past days have successively crowded upon my mind; and every object here reminds me so much of a beloved and revered parent, that I cannot but feel deeply.

"He seems to have had a presentiment of his approaching end, but rather concealed it from others. I never felt myself of such power to console as at this moment. My dear mother says, 'You are my oak, and I am a poor ivy, clinging around you: now you are my child indeed.'"

The ensuing letter contains all the particulars with which we are furnished respecting the decease of this excellent woman, in January, 1819. It is addressed to one of his daughters. He had previously seen her on his return from Scotland, in the preceding autumn; and remarked that she looked more aged, though not complaining; but she expressed her apprehensions that they were meeting for the last time.

"My dear F——; I am just returned, after executing the difficult and affecting task of preaching a funeral sermon for my most excellent and revered mother, at her parish church. I took my subject from Psalm cxvi. 1, as best suited to her

humble, meek, and believing frame of mind. It was indeed a trying effort; but God carried me through surprisingly. I introduced some very interesting papers, which I have found amongst her memoranda, in her own handwriting. Her last letter to me was—'Tell my son, I am going directly to happiness.'

"Never was there a more delightful and heavenly countenance than hers, as she lay in her coffin: it combined every sentiment which the most devout mind could desire: love—joy—peace—gentleness—goodness—faith—meekness—charity, all shone serenely bright. I followed her to her grave, in Lancaster churchyard, where she lies under a sycamore-tree, amid the magnificent landscape of sea, mountains, rivers, castle, and church, around. You remember its high beauties.—But you very imperfectly know the high qualities of head and heart which your grandmamma possessed—I never met with her equal at the same age. I occupy her little room, adjoining her bed-room, by day; and it is a great consolation to me to sit in her arm-chair and think of her, and read her papers on various subjects. There you and I took leave of her in November last—but, alas! her place knoweth her no more! I look out of the window, at the grand range of snowcapt mountains, which are now beautiful in the extreme. I had no conception of the winter beauties of these hills;—Lansdale Piles, Rydal Head, Hill Bell, Helvellyn, &c. &c. all finely illuminated with snow sunshine, in diversified shades. And then I think of my dear mother, and how she enjoyed their characteristic grandeur.

"Letters pour in daily from all parts of England, condoling with us in our great loss. My

mother was loved and honoured most extensively. Dear woman! for forty-seven years I have proved thy affection, and can trace, from earliest infancy, the tokens of thy worth. May I follow thee in humility, faith, and love; and cherish thy memory with gratitude and honour!"

MR. RICHMOND'S ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD.

In the spring of 1821, Mr. Richmond lost his infant child. He gives an account of this event, in a letter to his daughter; and he composed a few verses, to soothe the feelings of the mother, as well as to express his own.

"DEAR Mary,—Our dear delicate baby has taken his flight to a happier world!—I write beside his unspeakably beautiful remains. Of all my twelve babes, I never clung to one like this—perhaps, because I never expected his life. He was formed for a higher state than this, and is taken away from the evil to come. He had an inflammation on the chest for a few days. He died in my arms—lovelier than the loveliest, calmer than the calmest. His previously languid eye suddenly illumined into heavenly brightness and vigour: it looked at me with full intelligence—seemed to say, 'Farewell! I am going to Jesus'—and he was gone."

HYMN FOR AN INFANT'S FUNERAL.

"Hark! how the angels, as they fly,
Sing through the regions of the sky;
Bearing an infant in their arms,
Securely freed from sin's alarms:—

"Welcome, dear babe, to Jesu's breast—
For ever there in joy to rest:
Welcome to Jesu's courts above,
To sing thy great Redeemer's love!

"We left the heavens and flew to earth,
To watch thee at thy mortal birth:
Obedient to thy Saviour's will,
We stay'd to love and guard thee still.

"We thy protecting angels came,
To see thee bless'd in Jesus' name;
When the baptismal seal was given,
To mark thee, child, an heir of heaven.

"When the resistless call of death
Bade thee resign thy infant breath—
When parents wept, and thou didst smile,
We were thy guardians all the while.

"Now with the lightning's speed, we bear
The child committed to our care;
With anthems such as angels sing,
We fly to bear thee to our King.

"Thus sweetly borne, he flies to rest;
We know 't is well—nay more, 't is best.
When we our pilgrim's path have trod,
Oh! may we find him with our God!

ON THE DEATH OF A LOVELY INFANT.

WERT thou a stranger from the world of bliss?
Some little seraph wand'ring from thy sphere,
Which came to tarry for a night in this,—
And with the light of morn to disappear?

Tell us, sweet babe, what made thee lose thy way
Amidst those stars which deck the azure sky?
Tell us, sweet babe, why with the morning's ray
Thy spirit wing'd again its flight on high?

Did something vex thee in this world below,
Or did some angel trace thy wand'ring path?
And to prevent thy days and nights of woe,
Allured thee back beyond the stream of death.

Yet, thou art happy, though thy mould'ring bark
Must lie for ages on time's stormy shore,
Where all is lone, and desolate, and dark,
But where its loudest tempests vex no more.

Yes, thou art happy, and thy pure delight
Recalls no more thy silent wand'rings here;
For every sin of that short fleeting night,
Was laid on *one*, and paid with many a tear.

Oh! 't was enough, poor wand'rer of an hour,
To touch time's verge and breathe its very sigh;
To make thee pass death's vale, whose dark'ning lower
Must open up the portals of the sky.

WEIR.

THEY ONLY CAN BE SAID TO POSSESS A CHILD FOR EVER, WHO HAVE LOST ONE IN INFANCY.

Our beauteous child we laid amidst the silence of the dead,
We heap'd the earth, and spread the turf above the cherub head,
We turn'd again to sunny life, to other ties as dear,
And the world thought us comforted when we have dried the tear.

And time has roll'd its onward tide, and in its
ample range,
Has pour'd along the happiest paths, vicissitude
and change;
The flexile forms of infancy their earliest leaves
have shed,
And the tall and stately forest-trees are waving in
their stead.

We guide not now our children's steps, as we were
wont before,
For they have sprung to warrior men, they lean
on us no more;
We gaze upon the lofty brow, and time and thought
have cast
A shade through which we seek in vain the
memory of the past.

And do we mourn the other change which mocks
our memory here?
Ah! no, 'tis but the answer'd wish of many a
secret prayer;
Centre of all our fondest hopes, we live but in their
fame,
But our love as to a little child, how can it be the
same?

We still have one, an only one, secure in sacred
trust,
It is the lone and lovely one that 's sleeping in
the dust;
We fold it in our arms again, we see it by our
side,
In the helplessness of innocence, which sin has
never tried.

All earthly trust, all mortal years, however light
they fly,
But darken on the glowing cheek, and dim the
eagle eye;
But thee, our bright unwith'ring flower, our spirit's
hoarded store,
We keep through every chance and change the
same for evermore.

ANONYMOUS.

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE IN SUFFERING.

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.

THE main of a Christian's duty lies in these two things, patience in suffering, and avoidance of sin; and they have a natural influence upon each other. Although affliction simply doth not, yet affliction sweetly and humbly carried, doth purify and disengage the heart from sin, wean it from the world and the common ways of it. And again, holy and exact walking keeps the soul in a sound, healthful temper, and so enables it to patient suffering, to bear things more easily; as a strong body endures fatigue, heat, cold, and hardship, with ease, a small part whereof would surcharge a sickly constitution. The consciousness of sin, and careless, unholy courses, do wonderfully weaken a soul, and distemper it, so that it is not able to endure much; every little thing disturbs it. Therefore, the Apostle hath reason, both to insist so much on these two points in this Epistle, and likewise to interweave the one so often with the other,

pressing jointly throughout, the cheerful bearing of all kinds of afflictions, and the careful forbearing of all kinds of sin; and out of the one discourse, he slides into the other; as here.

And as the things agree in their nature, so, in their great pattern and principle, Jesus Christ: and the Apostle still draws both thence; that of patience, ch. iii. 18, that of holiness, here: *Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us*, &c.

The chief study of a Christian, and the very thing that makes him to be a Christian, is, conformity with Christ. *Summa religionis imiteri quem colis*, *This is the sum of religion*, (said that wise heathen, Pythagoras,) *to be like him whom thou worshippest.* But this example being in itself too sublime, is brought down to our view in Christ; the brightness of God is veiled, and veiled in our own flesh, that we may be able to look on it. The inaccessible light of the Deity is so attempered in the humanity of Christ, that we may read our lesson by it in Him, and may direct our walk by it. And that truly is our only way; there is nothing but wandering and perishing in all other ways, nothing but darkness and misery out of Him; but *He that follows me* says He, *shall not walk in darkness.* John viii. 12. And therefore is he set before us in the Gospel, in so clear and lively colours, that we may make this our whole endeavour, to be like Him.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Hereunto were ye called. The particular things that Christians are here said to be called to, are *suffering*, as their lot, and *patience*, as their duty,

even under the most unjust and undeserved sufferings.

And both these are as large as the sphere of this calling. Not only servants and others of a mean condition, who, lying low, are the more subject to rigours and injuries, but generally, all who are called to godliness, are likewise called to sufferings. 2 Tim. iii. 12. All that will follow Christ, must do it in his livery; they must take up their cross. This is a very harsh and unpleasing article of the Gospel to a carnal mind, but the Scriptures conceal it not. Men are not led blindfold into sufferings, and drawn into a hidden snare by the Gospel's invitations; they are told it very often, that they may not pretend a surprisal, nor have any just plea for starting back again. So our Saviour tells his disciples, why he was so express and plain with them in this, *These things have I told you that ye be not offended*, John xvi. 1; as if he had said, I have shown you the ruggedness of your way, that you may not stumble at it, taking it to be a smooth plain one. But then, where this is spoken of, it is usually allayed with the mention of those comforts that accompany these sufferings, or of that glory which follows them. The doctrine of the Apostles, which was so verified in their own persons, was this, *That we must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God*, Acts xiv. 22. An unpleasant way, indeed, if you look no farther, but a *kingdom* at the end of it, and that *the kingdom of God*, will transfuse pleasure into the most painful step in it all. It seems a sad condition that falls to the share of godly men in this world, to be eminent in sorrows and troubles. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous*, Psalm xxxiv. 19: but that which follows, weighs them abundantly down

in consolation, that the Lord himself is engaged in their afflictions, both for their deliverance out of them in due time, and, in the mean time, for their support and preservation under them: *The Lord delivers them out of them all*, and till He does that, *He keepeth all their bones*. This was literally verified in the natural body of Christ, as St. John observes, John xix. 36; and it holds spiritually true in his mystical body. The Lord supports the spirits of believers in their troubles, with such solid consolations as are the pillars and strength of their souls, as the bones of the body, which the Hebrew word for them imports. So, *He keepeth all his bones;* and the desperate condition of wicked men is opposed to this, verse 21, to illustrate it, *Evil shall slay the wicked.*

Thus, John xvi. 33, they are forewarned in the close, what to expect at the world's hands, as they were divers times before in that same sermon; but it is a sweet testament, take it altogether: *Ye shall have tribulation in the world, but peace in Me.* And seeing He hath jointly bequeathed these two to his followers, were it not great folly to renounce such a bargain, and to let go that peace for fear of this trouble? The trouble is but *in the world*, but the *peace* is *in Him*, who weighs down thousands of worlds.

So then, they do exceedingly mistake and misreckon, who would reconcile Christ and the world, who would have the Church of Christ, or at least, themselves for their own shares, enjoy both kinds of peace together; would willingly have peace in Christ, but are very loath to part with the world's peace. They would be Christians, but they are very ill satisfied when they hear of any thing but ease and prosperity in that estate, and willingly

forget the tenor of the Gospel in this; and so, when times of trouble and sufferings come, their minds are as new and uncouth to it, as if they had not been told of it before hand. They like better St. Peter's carnal advice to Christ, to avoid suffering, Matt. xvi. 22, than his Apostolic doctrine to Christians, teaching them, that as Christ *suffered*, so they likewise *are called to suffering*. Men are ready to think as Peter did, that Christ should favour himself more in his own body, his Church, than to expose it in so much suffering; and most would be of Rome's mind in this, at least in affection, that the badge of the Church should be pomp and prosperity, and not the cross; the true cross and afflictions are too heavy and painful.

But *God's thoughts are not as ours*; those whom he calls to a kingdom, He calls to sufferings as the way to it. He will have the heirs of heaven know, that they are not at home on earth, and that *this is not their rest*. He will not have them, with the abused world, fancy a happiness here, and as St. Augustine says, *Beatam vitam quærere in regione mortis*—seek a happy life in the region of death. The reproaches and wrongs that encounter them shall elevate their minds often to that land of peace and rest, *where righteousness dwells*. 2 Pet. iii. 13. The hard taskmaster shall make them weary of Egypt, which otherwise, possibly, they would comply too well with; shall dispose them for deliverance, and make it welcome, which, it may be, they might but coldly desire, if they were better used.

He knows what He does, who secretly serves His own good purposes by men's evil ones, and, by the *ploughers that make long furrows* on the back of His Church, (Psal. cxxix. 3,) makes it a fruitful

field to Himself. Therefore, it is great folly and unadvisedness, to take up a prejudice against His way, to think it might be better as we would model it, and to complain of the order of things, whereas we should complain of disordered minds: but we had rather have all altered and changed for us, the very course of Providence, than seek the change of our own perverse hearts. But the right temper of a Christian is, to run always cross to the corrupt stream of the world and human iniquity, and to be willingly carried along with the stream of Divine Providence, and not at all to stir a hand, no, nor a thought, to row against that mighty current; and not only is he carried with it upon necessity, because there is no steering against it, but cheerfully and voluntarily; not because he must, but because he would.

And this is the other thing to which Christians are jointly called; as to suffering, so to *calmness of mind* and *patience in suffering*, although their suffering be most unjust; yea, this is truly a part of that duty they are called to, to maintain that integrity and inoffensiveness of life that may make their sufferings at men's hands always unjust. The entire duty here, is innocence and patience; doing willingly no wrong to others, and yet cheerfully suffering wrong when done to themselves. If either of the two be wanting, their suffering does not credit their profession, but dishonours it. If they be patient under deserved suffering, their guiltiness darkens their patience: and if their sufferings be undeserved, yea, and the cause of them honourable, yet impatience under them stains both their sufferings and their cause, and seems in part to justify the very injustice that is used against them; but when innocence and patience meet

together in suffering, their sufferings are in their perfect lustre. These are they who honour religion, and shame the enemies of it. It was the concurrence of these two that was the very triumph of the martyrs in times of persecution, that tormented their tormentors, and made them *more than conquerors*, even in sufferings.

Now that we are called both to suffering and to this manner of suffering, the Apostle puts out of question, by the supreme example of our Lord Jesus Christ; for the sum of our calling is, *to follow him*. Now in both these, in suffering, and in suffering innocently and patiently, the whole history of the Gospel testifies how complete a pattern He is.

Now this is reason enough, and carries it beyond all other reason, why Christians are called to a suffering life, seeing the Lord and Author of that calling, suffered himself so much. *The Captain*, or Leader, *of our salvation*, as the Apostle speaks, was *consecrated by suffering*, Heb. ii. 10: that was the way by which *He entered into the holy place*, where He is now *our everlasting High Priest, making intercession for us*. If He be our Leader to salvation, must not we follow Him in the way He leads, whatsoever it is? If it be (as we see it is) by the way of sufferings, we must either follow on in that way, or fall short of salvation; for there is no other leader, nor any other way than that which He opened; so that there is not only a congruity in it, that His followers be conformed to Him in suffering, but a necessity, if they will follow Him on, till they attain to glory. And the consideration of both these, cannot but argue a Christian into a resolution for this *via regia*, this royal way of suffering that leads to glory, through

which their King and Lord himself went to His glory. It could hardly be believed at first, that this was *His* way, and we can hardly yet believe that it must be ours. *O fools, and slow of heart to believe! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?* Luke xxiv. 25, 26.

Would you be at glory, and will you not follow your Leader in the only way to it? Must there be another way cut out for you by yourself? O absurd! *Shall the servant be greater than his master?* John xiii. 6. Are not you fairly dealt with? If you have a mind to Christ, you shall have full as much of the world's good will as He had: *if it hate you*, He bids you remember, *how it hated Him.* John xv. 18.

But though there were a way to do otherwise, would you not, if the love of Christ possessed your hearts, rather choose to share with Him in His lot, and would you not find delight in the very trouble of it? Is not this conformity to Jesus, the great ambition of all his true-hearted followers? *We carry about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus*, says the great Apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 10. Besides the unspeakable advantage to come, which goes linked with this, that *if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him*, (2 Tim. ii. 12,) there is a glory, even in this present resemblance, that we are conformed to the image of the Son of God in sufferings. Why should we desire to leave Him? Are you not one with him? Can you choose but have the same common friends and enemies? Would you willingly, if it might be, could you find in your heart to be friends with that world which hated your Lord and Master? Would you have nothing but kindness and ease, where He had

nothing but enmity and trouble? Or would you not rather, when you think aright of it, refuse and disdain to be so unlike Him? As that good Duke said, when they would have crowned him King of Jerusalem, *No*, said he, *by no means, I will not wear a crown of gold where Jesus was crowned with thorns.*

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

"WEEP FOR YOURSELVES,—AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN."
St. Luke.

WE mourn for those who *toil*,
The slave who ploughs the main,
Or him who hopeless tills the soil
Beneath the stripe and chain;
For those who in the world's hard race
O'erwearied and unblest,
A host of restless phantoms chase,—
Why mourn for those who *rest*?

We mourn for those who *sin*,
Bound in the tempter's snare,—
Whom syren pleasure beckons in
To prisons of despair,
Whose hearts by whirlwind passions torn
Are wreck'd on folly's shore,—
But why in sorrow should we mourn
For those who *sin no more*?

We mourn for those who weep,—
Whom stern afflictions bend
With anguish o'er the lowly sleep
Of lover or of friend;—

But they to whom the sway
Of pain and grief is o'er,
Whose tears our God hath wiped away,
Oh mourn for them no more!

ANONYMOUS.

FUTURE GLORY.

COULD I extract the choicest dignities and fortunes; could I inhabit the most temperate clime, and the most pleasant country; could I choose the most benevolent hearts, and the wisest minds; could I take the most happy temper, and the most sublime genius; could I cultivate the sciences, and make the fine arts flourish; could I collect and unite all that could please the passions, and banish all that could give pain. A life formed on this plan, how likely to please us! How is it, that God, who hath resolved to render us one day happy, doth not allow us to continue in this world, and content himself with uniting all these happy circumstances in our favour? "It is good to be here!" O that he would allow us here to build our tabernacles! Matt. xvii. 4. A life formed on this plan might indeed answer the ideas of happiness which feeble and finite geniuses form; but such a plan cannot even approach the designs of an infinite God. A life formed on this plan, might indeed exhaust a terrestrial love, but it could never reach the love of an infinite God. No, all the charms of this society, of this fortune, and of this life; no, all the softness of these climates, and of these countries; no, all the benevolence of these hearts, and all the friendship of these minds; no, all the happiness of this temper, and all the sublimity of this genius; no, all the secrets of the sciences, and all the dis-

coveries of the fine arts; all the attractions of these societies and all the pleasures of the passions, have nothing, I do not say which exhausts the love of God in Christ Jesus, I do not say which answers, I venture to say which approaches it. To accomplish this love, there must be another world; there must be 'new heavens and a new earth."

O that I could describe the believer,—his unutterable felicity,—while all "the tribes of the earth mourn and smite their breasts:" O that I could describe the believer assured, triumphant, founded on the Rock of Ages, "hastening unto the coming of the day of God;" aiming with transports of joy which we cannot express,—O may we one day experience these transports! aiming to approach the presence of Jesus Christ as his tenderest friend and deliverer, literally proving the truth of the promise, "When thou passest through the waters they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest through the fires, they shall not kindle upon thee!" O that I could represent him, crying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Come! receive a creature once defiled with sin, sometimes even rebellious, yet having in his bosom principles of love to thee, but now ravished with transports of joy, because he is entering on a world, in which he shall be always obedient, and always faithful.

SAURIN.

SONG.

A long farewell to sin and sorrow,
To beam of day and evening shade!
High in glory breaks our morrow,
With light that cannot fade.

While mortal flesh in flame is bleeding,
For humble penitence and love,
Our Brother and our Lord is pleading
At Mercy's throne above.

We leave the hated and the hating
Existence sad in toil and strife;
The great, the good, the brave are waiting,
To hail our opening life.

Earth's faded sounds our ears forsaking,
A moment's silence death shall be;
Then, to heaven's jubilee awaking,
Faith ends in victory.

MISS BAILLIE.

AFFECTING LETTER FROM A DYING WIFE.

BEFORE this can reach the best of husbands and the fondest lover, those tender names will be of no more concern to me. The indisposition in which you, to obey the dictates of your honour and duty, left me, has increased upon me, and I am acquainted by my physicians I cannot live a week longer. At this time, my spirits fail me; and it is the ardent love I have for you, that carries me beyond my strength, and enables me to tell you, the most painful thing in the prospect of death, is, that I must part with you. But let it be a comfort to you, that I have no guilt that hangs upon me, no unrepented folly that retards me, but I pass away my last hours in reflecting upon the happiness in which we have lived together, and in sorrow that it is so soon to have an end. This is a frailty which I hope is so far from criminal, that methinks there is a kind of piety in being so unwilling to be se-

parated from a state which is the institution of Heaven, and in which we have lived according to its laws. As we know no more of the next life, but that it will be an happy one to the good, and miserable to the wicked, why may we not please ourselves at least, to alleviate the difficulty of resigning this being, in imagining that we shall have a sense of what passes below, and may possibly be employed in guiding the steps of those with whom we walked with innocence when mortal? Why may not I hope to go on in my usual work, and, though unknown to you, be assistant in all the conflicts of your mind? Give me leave to say to you, O best of men, that I cannot figure to myself a greater happiness than in such an employment. To be present at all the adventures to which human life is exposed, to administer slumber to thy eye-lids in the agonies of a fever, to cover thy beloved face in the day of battle, to be with thee a guardian angel, incapable of wound or pain, where I have longed to attend thee when a weak, a fearful woman. These, my dear, are the thoughts with which I warm my poor languid heart; but, indeed, I am not capable, under my present weakness, of bearing the strong agonies of mind I fall into, when I form to myself the grief you will be in upon your first hearing of my departure. I will not dwell upon this; because your kind and generous heart will but be more afflicted, the more the person for whom you lament offers you consolation. My last breath will, if I am myself, expire in a prayer for you. I shall never see thy face again. Farewell, for ever.

SPECTATOR.

FUNERAL HYMN.

Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb;
Thy Saviour has pass'd through its portal before thee,
And the lamp of his love is thy guide through the gloom!

Thou art gone to the grave!—we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough paths of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may die, for the sinless have died!

Thou art gone to the grave!—and its mansion forsaking,
Perchance thy weak spirit in fear linger'd long;
But the mild rays of Paradise beam'd on thy waking,
And the sound which thou heard'st was the seraphim's song!

Thou art gone to the grave!—but we will not deplore thee,
Whose God was thy ransom, thy guardian and guide;
He gave thee—He took thee—and He will restore thee,
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died.

ANONYMOUS.

"IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION, BUT BE OF GOOD CHEER."

THERE must be shade spots in the pilgrimage :
Our Father wills it so.—There lurks a thorn
Even in the rose-cup which we cull and wear
Next to our heart. What matters it?—The cloud,
The pang are transient;—but the hope that springs
From their stern ministry,—the faith that looks
Up to its God, when these low skies are dim,
Outweigh all miseries which this fleeting world
In her worst wrath can teach.—The Saviour knew
Her whole of tribulation,—yet he bade
Be of good cheer,—since in the shielded breast
Was power to overcome.—

——————Wilt thou despair,
Thou born of God! because the shallow rills
Fed but by dew-drops of terrestrial good,
Recede and vanish?—Sent awhile to share
Time's changes,—and on death's dark wing to rise
Above them all, why should a sway so brief
Appal the spirit?—Think how low thy brow,
Thy throbbing brow beneath the clods shall rest;
How soon forgotten 'mid its daily haunts
Thy form must be.—

———Another hand shall pluck
Thy cherish'd flowrets,—and a race unknown
Reap the ripe fruits of all thy sleepless care,
And thank thee not.—Another at thy board
Thy place shall fill, and in thy fireside chair
A stranger sit, while thou no more shalt claim
Note or remembrance.—This shall neutralize
Thy bitterness of spirit, when thy props
Are stricken from beneath thee,—or the grave
Bids thee pursue a lonely pilgrimage,
Hiding thy bosom's idols.

———Ask of God
To arm thy heart, even as the stripling youth
Who with the simple weapons of the brook
The vaunting giant slew. Be thy step firm,
And thy demeanour like some angel guest,
Patient of earth, yet for Heaven's bliss prepared.

ANONYMOUS.

ON THE LOSS OF A WIFE.

I HAVE been just informed of the loss of your dear wife. She was mortal; but she has now become immortal. Should this cause you to grieve immoderately? O that I was where she is now!

> "Safe landed on that peaceful shore,
> Where pilgrims meet to part no more."

She was once a mourning sinner in the wilderness; but is now a glorified saint in Zion. The Lord has become her "everlasting light, and the days of her mourning are ended." Does this overwhelm you? She was once afflicted with bodily pains and weakness, encompassed with family cares, and harassed with a crowd of anxious needless fears; but she is now arrived at her father's house; and Jesus has wiped away all tears from her eyes; and freed her in a moment from pain, and care, and fear, and want; and shall this make you sorrow, as those who have no hope?

You have not left your wife; she has only left you for a little moment; left her husband on earth, to visit her Father in heaven; and expects your arrival there soon, to join her hallelujahs for redeeming love. And are you still weeping? weeping because your wife can weep no more,—weeping because she is happy,—eternally, gloriously happy,

—weeping, because she is joined to the blessed assembly where all are kings and priests,—weeping, because she is, where you would be, and long to be eternally. The Lord Jesus has called her home to his kingdom, to draw your soul more ardently thither,—he has broken up a cistern, to bring you nearer, and keep you closer to the overflowing fountain of all felicity BERRIDGE.

REMINISCENCES.

"YES, I behold again the place,
The seat of joy, the source of pain;
It brings in view the form and face
That I must never see again.

"The night-bird's song that sweetly floats
On this soft gloom—this balmy air,
Brings to the mind her sweeter notes
That I again must never hear.

"Lo! yonder shines that window's light,
My guide, my token, heretofore;
And now again it shines as bright,
When those dear eyes can shine no more.

"Then hurry from this place away!
It gives not now the bliss it gave;
For Death has made its charm his prey,
And joy is buried in her grave."

CRABBE.

THE FATHER TO HIS MOTHERLESS CHILDREN.

Come, gather closer to my side,
My little smitten flock,
And I will tell of him who brought
Pure water from the rock—
Who boldly led God's people forth
From Egypt's wrath and guile,
And once a cradled babe did float,
All helpless on the Nile.

You're weary, precious ones, your eyes
Are wandering far and wide,—
Think ye of her who knew so well
Your tender thought to guide?
Who could to Wisdom's sacred lore
Your fix'd attention claim?
Ah! never from your hearts erase
That blessed Mother's name.

'Tis time to sing your evening hymn,
My youngest infant dove;
Come press thy velvet cheek to mine,
And learn the lay of love;
My sheltering arms can clasp you all,
My poor deserted throng;
Cling as you used to cling to her
Who sings the angel's song.

Begin, sweet birds, the accustom'd strain,
Come, warble loud and clear;
Alas! alas! you're weeping all,
You're sobbing in my ear;
Good-night—go say the prayer she taught,
Beside your little bed,
The lips that used to bless you there,
Are silent with the dead.

A father's hand your course may guide
Amid the thorns of life,
His care protect those shrinking plants
That dread the storms of strife;
But who, upon your infant hearts,
Shall like that mother write?
Who touch the strings that rule the soul?
Dear, smitten flock, good night!

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

A WIDOWER'S ADDRESS TO THE SPIRIT OF HIS DEAD CHILD.

PLEDGE of a Love, as pure and deep
As ever thrill'd in mortal breast!
I would not, could I break thy sleep,
Recall thee from the couch of rest,
Where thou art now in peace reclining,
A stranger to the world's repining!

No;—bright as was thy brief career
In this wild waste of storm and gloom,
And much as I have wish'd thee here
My soul's dark sorrows to illume—
In loneliness I 'd rather languish,
Than have thee partner in my anguish!

Besides, would even Heaven allow
Thy advent to this earth again,
That boon to thee were cruel now
Since human ills—a numerous train—
Would cross thee in thy path of life,
And stir thy young, sweet thoughts to strife!

When she, whose fond maternal eye
Watch'd thy first brightening hours of bliss,
Fled to a world beyond the sky,
And left us to the woes of this;

I deem'd not Fate could have in store
A future grief to touch me more.

But soon by dire experience taught,
I found that fantasy untrue;
Once more—with added misery fraught,
The dark death-dealing arrow flew:
Oh God! my soul—erewhile in sadness—
That stroke had almost stung to madness!

The passions of that hour are past,
And brokenly my heart lives on;
Though this will soothe me to the last—
Whate'er betide—to dwell upon:
'T were better far that thou shouldst be
Where now thou art, than here with me!

Yet looking on thy sun-bright tress,
Unlocks the source of dried-up tears;
And thoughts intense and maddening press
On my hot brain:—though hopes or fears,
Since thou and thy sweet mother perish'd,
Have ne'er by me been felt or cherish'd!

Blossom of love! yes, on my mind
Strange and unusual feelings rush,—
The flood-gates of my heart unbind,
And bid its waters wildly gush,—
As gazing on these threads, I see
The all that now remains of thee!

Sweet Baby mine, farewell! farewell!
I go to join the noisy throng;
But in my soul's deep-haunted cell,
Thoughts that to thine and thee belong
Shall ever bloom—as fresh and fair
As if they 'd just been planted there.

And, oh! if tears of woe can nourish
The flowers of memory in the breast;
Then these in mine will surely flourish—
And each succeeding hour invest
Their stems with charms unknown before,
Till we three meet, to part no more!

ALARIC A. WATTS.

TO MY MOTHER'S MEMORY.

My Mother! weary years have pass'd, since last
I met thy gentle smile; and sadly then
It fell upon my young and joyous heart.
There was a mortal paleness on thy cheek,
And well I knew, they bore thee far away
With a vain hope to mend the broken springs—
The springs of life. And bitter tears I shed
In childhood's short-lived agony of grief,
When soothing voices said that thou wert gone,
And that I must not weep, for thou wert blest.
Full many a flower has bloom'd upon thy grave,
And many a winter's snow has melted there;
Childhood has pass'd, and youth is passing now,
And scatters paler roses on my path;
Dim and more dim my fancy paints thy form,
Thy mild blue eye, thy cheek so thin and fair,
Touch'd, when I saw thee last, with hectic flush,
Telling, in solemn beauty, of the grave.
Mine ear hath lost the accents of thy voice,
And faintly o'er my memory comes at times
A glimpse of joys that had their source in thee,
Like one brief strain of some forgotten song.
And then at times a blessed dream comes down,
Mission'd, perhaps, by thee from brighter realms;

And wearing all the semblance of thy form,
Gives to my heart the joy of days gone by.
With gushing tears I wake; O, art thou not
Unseen and bodiless around my path,
Watching with brooding love about thy child?
Is it not so, my mother? I will not
Think it a fancy, wild, and vain, and false,
That spirits good and pure as thine, descend
Like guardian angels round the few they loved,
Oft intercepting coming woes, and still
Joying on every beam that gilds our paths;
And waving snowy pinions o'er our heads
When midnight slumbers close our aching eyes.

ANONYMOUS.

ON THE LOSS OF A FATHER.

LITTLE did I think that a letter from you would afflict my soul; but yours received this morning has indeed done it. Seeing your hand and a black seal, my mind foreboded what had happened; I made an attempt to read it to my daughters, but I could not; I got no further than the first sentence, burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retreat into the solitude of my study, unfit for any thing, but to think on what had happened; then to fall on my knees, and pray that God would evermore pour down his choicest blessings on the children of my departed friend; and, as their "father and their mother had forsaken them," that he would "take them up," and support them in time and eternity. Even so, Amen.

You ask comfort of me; but your truly excellent letter has suggested comfort to me, from all the proper topics; and I can only reflect it back to you

again. All things considered, the circumstance which first marked the disorder may be termed a gracious dispensation. It at once rendered the event, one may say, desirable, which otherwise carried so much terror and sorrow in the face of it. Nothing else in the world could so soon and so effectually have blunted the edge of the approaching calamity, and reconciled to it minds full of the tenderest love and affection.

To complete the only consolation that remained, which we all know to be the fact, your dear father stood always so prepared, so firm in his faith, so constant in his Christian practice in every duty, that he could not be taken by surprise, or off his guard. The stroke must have been to himself a blessing, whenever or however it came. His death was his birth-day; and, like the primitive Christians, we should keep it as such, as a day of joy and triumph.

Bury his body, but embalm his example, and let it diffuse its fragrance among you from generation to generation. Call him blessed; and endeavour to be like him; like him, in piety, in charity, in friendship, in courteousness, in temper, in conduct, in word, and in deed. His virtues compose a little volume, which your brother should carry in his bosom; and if that be well studied, it will make him the gentleman and the Christian.

BISHOP HORNE.

FUNERAL HYMN.

BROTHER, thou art gone before us,
And thy saintly soul is flown
Where tears are wiped from every eye,
And sorrow is unknown.

From the burthen of the flesh,
And from care and fear released,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

The toilsome way thou 'st travell'd o'er,
And borne the heavy load,
But Christ hath taught thy languid feet
To reach his blest abode;
Thou 'rt sleeping now, like Lazarus
Upon his father's breast,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

Sin can never taint thee now,
Nor doubt thy faith assail,
Nor thy meek trust in Jesus Christ
And the Holy Spirit fail:
And there thou 'rt sure to meet the good,
Whom on earth thou lovedst best,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

"Earth to earth," and "dust to dust,"
The solemn priest hath said,
So we lay the turf above thee now,
And we seal thy narrow bed:
But thy spirit, brother, soars away
Among the faithful blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

MILMAN.

ON THE DEATH OF AN ONLY SON.

I SINCERELY sympathize with you, says Dr. Erskine, in a letter to a friend, on your heavy and unexpected trial. I have drunk deep of the same cup; of nine sons, only one survives. From what I repeatedly felt, I can form an idea what you must feel in so promising an only son taken from you. I cannot, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely, he allows you to weep; surely, there is a "needs be" that you feel a heaviness under such a trial. But O, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not, how this, or a former trial, shall work for your good, but it is enough that God knows. He that said, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin, and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished, at the season and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted; you know not what work and joy have been waiting for him in that world, where God's "servants shall serve him."

Should you sorrow immoderately when you have such ground of hope that he, and his other parent, are rejoicing in what you lament? I know that nature will feel; and I believe, suppressing its emotions in such cases is not profitable, either to soul or body; but, I trust, though you mourn, God will

keep you from murmuring, and that you shall have to glory in your tribulation and infirmity, while the power of Christ is manifested thereby.

ERSKINE.

THE HAPPY SPIRIT.

"Weep not, my mother, weep not,—I am blest,
But must leave heaven if I return to thee;
For I am where the weary are at rest,
The wicked cease from troubling.—Come to me!"
Old Epitaph.

"WHY do ye weep?—to know that dust
No longer dims my soul?
To know that I am render'd just,
A victor at heaven's goal?
Or weep ye that I weep no more—
That sorrow's living reign is o'er?

"Father—art thou a man of tears,
Because thy child is free
From the earthly strifes and human fears,
Oppressive even to thee?
Nay, triumph that thou bad'st me love
The rest, that I have found above.

"My mother, weep not—tears will hide
My glory from thy view;
If thou hadst taught me guile, or pride,
Then tears of blood were due;
But thy fond lips spoke truths divine:
Rejoice that now their meed is mine.

"Sister, sweet sister, leave my tomb,
Thy loved one is not there,
Nor will its planted flow'rets bloom
Whilst wept on by despair;
I dwell in blissful scenes of light:
Rejoice that thou didst aid my flight.

"Let faith's resplendent sun arise,
And scatter from each soul
The clouds that veil its native skies,
The mists that round it roll:
Rejoice, that I have found a home,
Whence never more my feet will roam.

"Tears for the dead who die in sin,
And tears for living crime:
Tears when the conscience wakes within
First in expiring time;
Tears for the lost—but Heaven's own voice
Says for the Christian dead—Rejoice."

ANONYMOUS.

ON THE LOSS OF A SISTER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Permit me to express the deep interest I take in your distress, from the loss of the best of friends, and the best of sisters. How many losses are united! She has left a husband to lament the most lovely of wives, you the most endeared of sisters, the church of Christ one of its brightest ornaments, and the world one of its fairest examples. Had I been permitted to draw aside the mysterious veil that hides futurity; could I have had any presentiment of what was about to occur, when I saw

her the last time, how solemn would have been the moments, how awfully interesting my emotions! I know the heart, when recently wounded, must be indulged in the luxury of grief, and, if there ever was an occasion which could justify the most poignant regret, it is the present, in which we lament the loss of so much excellence. But I hope you will, by degrees, inure your imagination to dwell less on your loss, and more on her happiness. What a glorious display of the power of Christianity! What a triumphant departure! O that my last end may be like hers! Her life was an ornament to Christianity; a pattern to her sex. Immortality dawned on her enraptured mind, even before it quitted its earthly abode; and her pure and elevated spirit made an easy transit to the society of the blessed. Her career was short, but illustrious; and she crowded into her little sphere the virtues of a long life. Short as her continuance was upon earth, she was permitted to exemplify the duties of every character, and to imprint on the memories of all who were honoured with her acquaintance, the perfections of a friend, a sister, a mother, and a wife. It is true she has slept the sleep of death; but she sleeps in Jesus; she has gone before you into the holy of holies; she will meet you at the great rendezvous of being, the assembly of the just; and, in the mean time, instead of being an object of your pity, probably looks down upon you with ineffable tenderness and compassion.

I must say, I never heard, on the whole, of so calm, so triumphant a death; it seemed as if she had been permitted to step into heaven before her final departure, that she might thence address herself to her friends with more serenity, dignity, and effect.

What, my dear friend, besides Christianity, can thus scatter the horrors of the soul? What else could enable a young lady in the bloom of life, with a prosperous fortune, beloved by a husband, endeared to her friends, and esteemed by all, to triumph in the thoughts of dissolution? Divine Christianity! it is thine only to comfort and support the languishing and the dying.

Her numerous acquaintance should ask themselves, whether the loose sceptical principles of the age are at all adapted to such a scene; whether they have any thing in them that will enable them to exert the calm heroism displayed in the most trying moment by this departed excellence. Let me hope, that some one, at least, will be impressed by this wonderful example of the power of religion.

The consolations of your dear deceased sister did not result from a general belief of the doctrine of immortality; but in specific views of Christ as a Saviour, and the prospect of being for ever with him. My dear friend, let us hold fast this kind of Christianity, without wavering, as the antidote of death.

R. HALL.

THE SISTER'S GRAVE.

I HAD a little sister once,
And she was wondrous fair;
Like twined links of the yellow gold
Was the waving of her hair.

Her face was like a day in June,
When all is sweet and still,
And the shadows of the summer clouds
Creep softly o'er the hill.

O, my sister's voice—I hear it yet,
It comes upon mine ear,
Like the singing of a joyous bird,
When the summer months are near.

Sometimes the notes would rise at eve,
So fairy-like and wild,
My mother thought a spirit sang,
And not the gentle child.

But then we heard the little feet
Come dancing to the door,
And met the gaze of brighter eyes
Than ever spirit wore.

And she would enter full of glee,
Her long fair tresses bound
With a garland of the simple flowers
By mountain streamlets found.

She never bore the garden's pride,
The red rose, on her breast;
Our own sweet wild-flower ever loved
The other wild-flowers best.

Like them she seemed to cause no toil,
To give no pain or care,
But to bask and bloom on a lonely spot
In the warm and sunny air.

And oh! like them, as they come in Spring,
And with Summer's fate decay,
She passed with the sun's last parting smile,
From life's rough path away.

And when she died—'neath an old oak tree
My sister's grave was made;
For, when on earth, she used to love
Its dark and pensive shade.

And every spring in that old tree
The song-birds build their nests,
And wild-flowers blow on the soft green turf
Where my dead sister rests:

And the children of our village say
That on my sister's tomb
The wild-flowers are the last that fade,
And the first that ever bloom.

There is no stone raised there to tell
My sister's name and age,
For that dear name in every heart
Is carved on memory's page.

We miss her in the hour of joy,
For when all hearts were light,
There was no step so gay as hers,
No eyes so glad and bright.

We miss her in the hour of woe,
For then she tried to cheer,
And the soothing words of the pious child
Could dry the mourner's tear.

Even when she erred, we could not chide,
For though the fault was small,
She always mourned so much—and sued
For pardon from us all.

She was too pure for earthly love—
Strength to our hearts was given,
And we yielded her in her childhood's light,
To a brighter home in Heaven.

ANONYMOUS.

WEEP NOT FOR HER!

Weep not for her! her span was like the sky,
Whose thousand stars shine beautiful and bright,
Like flowers that know not what it is to die,
Like long-link'd shadeless months of polar light
Like music floating o'er a waveless lake,
While echo answers from the flowery brake,
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! she died in early youth,
Ere hope had lost its rich romantic hues,
When human bosoms seem'd the home of truth,
And earth still gleam'd with beauty's radiant dews.
Her summer prime waned not to days that freeze,
Her *wine* of life was not run to the lees,
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! By fleet or slow decay
It never grieved her bosom's core to mark
The play-mates of her childhood wane away,
Her prospects wither, and her hopes grow dark.
Translated by her God with spirit shriven,
She pass'd, as 't were on smiles, from earth to heaven;
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! It was not her's to feel
The miseries that corrode amassing years,
'Gainst dreams of baffled bliss the heart to steel,
To wander sad down age's vale of tears,
As whirl the wither'd leaves from friendship's tree,
And on earth's wintry world alone to be;
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! She is an angel now,
And treads the sapphire floors of Paradise,
All darkness wiped from her refulgent brow,
Sin, sorrow, suffering, banish'd from her eyes,
Victorious over death, to her appears
The vista'd joys of heaven's eternal years
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! Her memory is the shrine
Of pleasant thoughts soft as the scent of flowers,
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers,
Rich as a rainbow with its hues of light,
Pure as the moonlight of an autumn night:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! There is no cause of woe,
But rather nerve the spirit that it walk
Unshrinking o'er the thorny path below,
And from earth's low defilements keep thee back.
So when a few fleet swerving years have flown,
She 'll meet thee at heaven's gate—and lead thee on:
Weep not for her!

D. M. Moir.

ON THE LOSS OF A CHILD.

I SINCERELY sympathize with you in the loss of your child; but, my dear friend, do not suffer your spirits to sink. Remember the tenure on which all human enjoyments are held, the wisdom and sovereignty of their great Author, and the gracious promise afforded to true Christians, that "all things shall work together for good, to them that love him."

Remember, also, the many blessings with which a kind Providence still indulges you. Ought you not to rejoice, that your affectionate companion in life is spared; and that, though your child is snatched from your embraces, he has escaped from a world of sin and sorrow? The stamp of immortality is placed on his happiness, and he is encircled by the arms of a compassionate Redeemer. Had he been permitted to live, and you had witnessed the loss of his virtue, you might have been reserved to suffer still severer pangs. A most excellent family, in our congregation, are now melancholy spectators of a son dying, at nineteen years of age, by inches, a victim to his vices. They have frequently regretted he did not die several years since, when his life was nearly despaired of in a severe fever. "Who knoweth what is good for a man all the days of this his vain life, which he spends as a shadow?"

R. HALL.

TO A DYING INFANT.

SLEEP, little baby! sleep!
Not in thy cradle bed,
Not on thy mother's breast,
Henceforth shall be thy rest,
But quiet with the dead.

Yes! with the quiet dead,
Baby, thy rest shall be;
Oh! many a weary wight,
Weary of life and light,
Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling;
Flee to thy place of rest!
There the first flower shall blow,
The first pure flake of snow
Shall fall upon thy breast.

Peace! peace! the little bosom
Labours with shortening breath—
Peace! peace! that tremulous sigh
Speaks his departure nigh—
These are the damps of death.

I 've seen thee in thy beauty,
A thing all health and glee!
But never then wert thou,
So beautiful as now,
Baby! thou seem'st to me.

Mount up, immortal essence!
Young spirit! haste, depart—
And is this death?—dread thing!
If such thy visiting,
How beautiful thou art!

Thine upturn'd eyes glazed over,
Like harebells wet with dew,
Already veil'd and hid
By the convulsed lid,
Their pupils darkly blue.

Thy little mouth half open,
The soft lip quivering
As if (like summer air
Ruffling the rose-leaves) there
Thy soul were fluttering.

Oh! I could gaze for ever
Upon that waxen face:
So passionless, so pure!
The little shrine was sure
An angel's dwelling-place.

Thou weepest, childless mother!
Ay, weep—'t will ease thine heart—
He was thy first-born son,
Thy first, thine only one,
'T is hard from him to part!

'T is hard to lay thy darling
Deep in the damp cold earth—
His empty crib to see,
His silent nursery,
Once gladsome with his mirth.

To meet again in slumber
His small mouth's rosy kiss;
Then waken'd with a start
By thine own throbbing heart,
His twining arms to miss.

To feel, half conscious why,
A dull, heart-sinking weight,
Till memory on thy soul
Flashes the painful whole,
That thou art desolate.

And then to lie and weep,
And think the livelong night,
(Feeling thine own distress
With accurate greediness)—
Of every past delight.

Of all his winning ways,
His pretty playful smiles,
His joy at sight of thee,
His tricks, his mimicry,
And all his little wiles!

Oh! these are recollections
Round mothers' hearts that cling—
That mingle with the tears
And smiles of after years,
With oft awakening.

But thou wilt then, fond mother!
In after years look back
(Time brings such wondrous easing)
With sadness not unpleasing,
E'en on this gloomy track.

Thou 'lt say, 'My first-born blessing!
It almost broke my heart
When thou wert forced to go;
And yet, for thee, I know,
'T was better to depart.

"I look around, and see
The evil ways of men;
And, oh beloved child!
I 'm more than reconciled
To thy departure then.

"The little arms that clasp'd me,
The innocent lips that prest,
Would they have been as pure
Till now, as when of yore
I lull'd thee on my breast?

"Now, when the hour arrives
From flesh that sets me free,
Thy spirit may await,
The first at heaven's gate,
To meet and welcome me."

MISS BOWLES.

A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

To mark the sufferings of the babe,
That cannot speak its woe;
To see the infant tears gush forth,
Yet know not why they flow:
To meet the meek uplifted eye,
That fain would ask relief,
Yet can but tell of agony,—
THIS is a mother's grief.

Through dreary days and darker nights,
To trace the march of death;
To hear the faint and frequent sigh,
The quick and shorten'd breath:
To watch the last dread strife draw near
And pray that struggle brief,
Though all is ended with its close—
THIS is a mother's grief!

To see, in one short hour, decay'd
The hope of future years,
To feel how vain a father's prayers,
How vain a mother's tears;
To think the cold grave now must close
O'er what was once the chief
Of all the treasured joys of earth—
THIS is a mother's *grief*!

Yet when the first wild throb is past
Of anguish and despair,
To lift the eye of faith to heaven,
And think, "My child is *there!*"
THIS best can dry the gushing tears,
THIS yields the heart relief;
Until the Christian's pious hope
O'ercomes a mother's grief.

DALE.

"'T WAS BUT A BABE."

I ASK'D them why the verdant turf was riven
From its young rooting, and with silent lip
They pointed to a new-made chasm among
The marble-pillar'd mansions of the dead.
Who goeth to his rest in yon damp couch?
The tearless crowd past on—"'t was but a babe."
A babe!—And poise ye in the rigid scales
Of calculation, the fond bosom's wealth?
Rating its priceless idols as ye weigh
Such merchandise as moth and rust corrupt,
Or the rude robber steals? Ye mete out grief,
Perchance, when youth, maturity, or age,
Sink in the thronging tomb, but when the breath
Grows icy on the lip of innocence,
Repress your measured sympathies, and say
"'T *was but a babe.*"
What know ye of *her* love
Who patient watcheth till the stars grow dim
Over her drooping infant, with an eye
Bright as unchanging Hope if *his* repose?
What know ye of *her* woe who sought no joy
More exquisite, than on his placid brow
To trace the glow of health, and drink at dawn

The thrilling lustre of his waking smile?
Go ask that musing father why yon grave
So narrow and so noteless, might not close
Without a tear?
And though his lip be mute,
Feeling the poverty of speech, to give
Fit answer to thee, still his pallid brow
And the deep agonizing prayer that loads
Midnight's dark wing to *him* the God of strength,
May satisfy thy question.
Ye who mourn,
Whene'er yon vacant cradle, or the robes
That deck'd the lost one's form, call back a tide
Of alienated joy, can ye not trust
Your treasure to *His* arms, whose changeless care
Passeth a mother's love? Can ye not hope,
When a few hasting years their course have run,
To go to him, though he no more on earth
Returns to you?
And when glad Faith doth catch
Some echo of celestial harmonies,
Archangels' praises, with the high response
Of cherubim, and seraphim, oh think—
Think that your babe is there.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

THE DYING CHILD.

AH! look thy last, fond mother,
On the beauty of that brow,
For Death's cold hand is passing o'er
Its marble stillness now.
Those silken eyelids weighing down
Upon the glazed eye,
Are telling to thy aching heart,
The lovely one must die!

Yes, mother of the dying one,
The beautiful must go!
The pallid cheek and fading eye,
And trembling lip of snow,
Are signets from the hand of death,
When unseen angels come
To bear the young and beautiful
To their own happy home.

That soft white hand within thy own,
May never more entwine
Their arms around the mother's neck,
Like tendrils of the vine;
Those still, cold fingers never move
Along thy forehead fair,
Shall dally with the raven curls
That cluster thickly there.

The flashes of its speaking eye,
The music of its mirth,
Shall never more make glad the hearts
Around the parent's hearth;
Then look thy last, fond mother,
For the earth shall be above,
And curtain up that sleeping one—
The first-born of thy love!

But let thy burning thoughts go forth,
And pray that thou may'st meet
That sinless one, where worlds shall bow
Before the judgment seat;
And pray, that when the wing of death
Is shadow'd on thy brow,
Thy soul may be beside the one
That sleepeth near thee now.

"I THOUGHT IT SLEPT."

I saw the infant cherub—soft it lay,
As it was wont, within its cradle, now
Deck'd with sweet-smelling flowers. A sight so strange
Fill'd my young breast with wonder, and I gazed
Upon the babe the more. I thought it slept—
And yet its little bosom did not move!
I bent me down to look into its eyes,
But they were closed; then softly clasp'd its hand;
But mine it would not clasp. What should I do?
"Wake, brother, wake!" I then, impatient, cried;
"Open thine eyes, and look on me again!"
He would not hear my voice. All pale beside
My weeping mother sat, "and gazed and look'd
Unutterable things." "Will he not wake?"
I eager ask'd. She answer'd but with tears.
Her eyes on me, at length, with piteous look,
Were cast—now on the babe once more were fix'd,
And now on me: then, with convulsive sigh
And throbbing heart, she clasp'd me in her arms,
And, in a tone of anguish, faintly said—
"My dearest boy, thy brother does not sleep;
Alas! he 's dead; he never will awake."
He 's dead! I knew not what it meant, but more
To know I sought not. For the words so sad—
"He never will awake"—sunk in my soul:
I felt a pang unknown before; and tears
That angels might have shed, my heart dissolved.

HENRY PICKERING.

THE DYING CHILD.

'T is dying! life is yielding place
To that mysterious charm,
Which spreads upon the troubled face
A fix'd, unchanging calm,
That deepens as the parting breath
Is gently sinking into death.

A thoughtful beauty rests the while
Upon its snowy brow;
But those pale lips could never smile
More radiantly than now;
And sure some heavenly dreams begin
To dawn upon the soul within!

O that those mildly conscious lips
Were parted to reply—
To tell how death's severe eclipse
Is passing from thine eye;
For living eye can never see
The change that death hath wrought in thee.

Perhaps thy sight is wandering far
Throughout the kindled sky,
In tracing every infant star
Amid the flames on high;—
Souls of the just, whose path is bent
Around the glorious firmament.

Perhaps thine eye is gazing down
Upon the earth below,
Rejoicing to have gain'd thy crown,
And hurried from its woe
To dwell beneath the throne of Him,
Before whose glory heaven is dim.

Thy life! how cold it might have been,
If days had grown to years!
How dark, how deeply stain'd with sin,
With weariness and tears!
How happy thus to sink to rest,
So early number'd with the blest!

'T is well, then, that the smile should lie
Upon thy marble cheek:
It tells to our inquiring eye
What words could never speak—
A revelation sweetly given
Of all that man can learn of heaven.

ANONYMOUS.

THE DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

My sweet one, my sweet one, the tears were in my eyes
When first I clasp'd thee to my heart, and heard thy feeble cries;—
For I thought of all that I had borne, as I bent me down to kiss
Thy cherry lips and sunny brow, my first-born bud of bliss!
I turn'd to many a wither'd hope,—to years of grief and pain—
And the cruel wrongs of a bitter world flash'd o'er my boding brain;—
I thought of friends grown worse than cold, of persecuting foes,—
And I ask'd of Heaven, if ills like these must mar thy youth's repose?

I gazed upon thy quiet face—half blinded by my tears—
Till gleams of bliss, unfelt before, came brightening on my fears,—
Sweet rays of hope that fairer shone, 'mid the clouds of gloom that bound them,
As stars dart down their loveliest light when midnight skies are round them.

My sweet one, my sweet one, thy life's brief hour is o'er,
And a father's anxious fears for thee can fever me no more;
And for the hopes—the sun-bright hopes—that blossom'd at thy birth—
They too have fled, to prove how frail are cherish'd things of earth!
'T is true that thou wert young, my child, but tho' brief thy span below,
To me it was a little age of agony and woe;
For, from thy first faint dawn of life thy cheek began to fade,
And my heart had scarce thy welcome breathed, ere my hopes were wrapt in shade.
Oh the child, in its hours of health and bloom that is dear as thou wert then,
Grows far more prized—more fondly loved—in sickness and in pain;
And thus 't was thine to prove, dear babe, when every hope was lost,
Ten times more precious to my soul for all that thou hadst cost!
Cradled in thy fair mother's arms, we watch'd thee day by day,
Pale, like the second bow of Heaven, as gently waste away;

And sick with dark foreboding fears,we dared not
breathe aloud,
Sat, hand in hand, in speechless grief, to wait
death's coming cloud.
It came at length—o'er thy bright blue eye the
film was gathering fast;
And an awful shade pass'd o'er thy brow, the
deepest and the last;
In thicker gushes strove thy breath—we raised thy
drooping head,—
A moment more—the final pang—and thou wert
of the dead!
Thy gentle mother turn'd away to hide her face
from me,
And murmur'd low of Heaven's behests, and bliss
attain'd by thee;
She would have chid me that I mourn'd a doom
so blest as thine,
Had not her own deep grief burst forth in tears as
wild as mine!
We laid thee down in thy sinless rest, and from
thine infant brow
Cull'd one soft lock of radiant hair—our only so-
lace now,—
Then placed around thy beauteous corse, flowers—
not more fair and sweet—
Twin rose-buds in thy little hands, and jasmine at
thy feet.
Though other offspring still be ours, as fair per-
chance as thou,
With all the beauty of thy cheek—the sunshine
of thy brow,
They never can replace the bud our early fondness
nursed,
They may be lovely and beloved, but not like thee
—the first!

THE FIRST! How many a memory bright that
one sweet word can bring,
Of hopes that blossom'd, droop'd, and died, in life's
delightful spring;—
Of fervid feelings pass'd away—those early seeds
of bliss,
That germinate in hearts unsear'd by such a world
as this!
My sweet one, my sweet one, my fairest and my
first!
When I think of what thou might'st have been,
my heart is like to burst!
But gleams of gladness thro' my gloom their sooth-
ing influence dart,
And my sighs are hush'd, my tears are dried,
when I turn to what thou art!
Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls and takes the
stain of earth,
With not a taint of mortal life, except thy mortal
birth,—
God bade thee early taste the spring for which so
many thirst,
And bliss—eternal bliss—is thine, my fairest and
my first!

ALARIC A. WATTS.

TO A DYING INFANT

Go to thy rest, my child!
Go to thy dreamless bed,
Gentle and undefiled,
With blessings on thy head;
Fresh roses in thy hand,
Buds on thy pillow laid,
Haste from this fearful land,
Where flowers so quickly fade.

Before thy heart might learn
In waywardness to stray,
Before thy feet could turn
The dark and downward way;
Ere sin might wound the breast,
Or sorrow wake the tear,
Rise to thy home of rest,
In yon celestial sphere.

Because thy smile was fair,
Thy lip and eye so bright,
Because thy cradle-care
Was such a fond delight,
Shall Love with weak embrace
Thy heavenward flight detain?
No! Angel, seek thy place
Amid yon cherub-train.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

"IN THE GARDEN WAS A SEPULCHRE."

MOURN not ye, whose babe hath found
Purer skies and firmer ground,
Flowers of bright perennial hue,
Free from thorns, and fresh with dew,
Founts, that tempests never stir,
Gardens, without sepulchre.

Mourn not ye, whose babe hath sped,
From this region of the dead,
To yon winged seraph-band,
Golden lute and glorious land,
Where no tempter's subtle art
Clouds the brow or wounds the heart.

Knowledge, in that clime, doth grow
Free from weeds of toil and woe,
Peace, whose olive never fades,
Love, undimm'd by sorrow's shades,
Joys, which mortals may not share,
Mourn not ye, whose babe is there.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

HEBREW DIRGE.

"Mourn for the *living*, and not for the *dead*."
HEBREW DIRGE.

I saw an infant, marble cold,
Borne from the pillowing breast,
And in the shroud's embracing fold
Laid down to dreamless rest;
And moved with bitterness I sigh'd,
Not for the babe that slept,
But for the mother at its side,
Whose soul in anguish wept.

They bare a coffin to its place,
I ask'd them who was there?
And they replied, "a form of grace,
The fairest of the fair."
But for that blest one do ye moan,
Whose angel-wing is spread?
No, for the lover pale and lone,
His heart is with the dead.

I wander'd to a new-made grave,
And there a matron lay,
The love of Him who died to save
Had been her spirit's stay,

Yet sobs burst forth of torturing pain;
Wail ye for her who died?
No, for that timid, infant train
Who roam without a guide.

I murmur not for those who die,
Who rise to glory's sphere,
I deem the tenants of the sky
Need not our mortal tear.
Our woe seems arrogant and vain,
Perchance it moves their scorn,
As if the slave beneath his chain,
Deplored the princely born.

We live to meet a thousand foes,
We shrink with bleeding breast,
Why shall we weakly mourn for those
Who dwell in perfect rest?
Bound for a few sad, fleeting years,
A thorn-clad path to tread,
Oh! for the *living* spare those tears
Ye lavish on the *dead*.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

SUDDEN DEATH OF A CHILD.

JUST as the child could totter on the floor,
And, by some friendly finger's help upstay'd,
Range through the garden-walk, whose low ground-flowers
Were peeping forth,—shy messengers of spring,—
Even at that hopeful time, the winds of March,
One sunny day, smiting insidiously,
Raised in the tender passage of the throat
Viewless obstruction; whence, all unforewarn'd,
The household lost their hope and soul's delight.

—But Providence, that gives and takes away,
By his own law, is merciful and just;
Time wants not power to soften all regrets,
And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress
Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears
Fail not to spring from either parent's eye,
Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,
Yet, this departed little one, too long
The innocent trouble of their quiet, sleeps
In what may now be called, a peaceful grave.

WORDSWORTH.

A THOUGHT ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

————WHAT could have lured her
So early from her mother's breast to flee?
No sickening sights of sorrow had she seen,
That could affright her thence! surely it was
Some angel's whisper, breathed in heavenly tone,
That told her of the joys, before the throne
Of God, enjoy'd by those who, well escaped
From this earth's bondage, walk in bliss supreme,
And snow-white raiment there;—where only joy,
Perfect, can e'er be found,—where, (through atoning blood
Already shed for,) for Jesus' sake,
She should be welcome as yon aged saint
Just now in heaven, from arduous duties done,
Safely arrived,—that thousands gladly there
Would hail her, "Younger sister, welcome home!"
Would crowd around her, and, with kisses sweet,
And love's caresses, and some new-made song,
Lead her into the presence of her God,
To do her homage, and receive her crown;—
That they would vie, to teach her how to soar,

On her new wings, through regions infinite,
Bearing the messages of God Most High;—
That she should learn, with holy skill, to make
Celestial harmony from golden harps,
And sing that lovely song, "Worthy the Lamb!"
With emphasis beyond th' archangel's power.
All this was breathed in accents, far more sweet
Than any earthly sounds she yet had heard;
And my poor troubled spirit wonders not
That from her mother's bosom she could flee,
Such invitation given, so winningly;
That she should close on earthly things her eye,
And to her Saviour's presence gladly fly.

ANONYMOUS.

FUNERAL HYMN.

WHERE the long reeds quiver,
Where the pines make moan,
By the forest-river,
Sleeps our babe alone.
England's field-flowers may not deck his grave,
Cypress-shadows o'er him darkly wave.

Woods unknown receive him,
'Midst the mighty wild;
Yet with God we leave him,
Blessed, blessed child:
And our tears gush o'er his lovely dust,
Mournfully, yet still from hearts of trust.

Though his eye hath brighten'd
Oft our weary way,
And his clear laugh lighten'd
Half our hearts' dismay;
Still in hope we give back what was given,
Yielding up the Beautiful to Heaven.

And to her who bore him,
Her who long must weep,
Yet shall heaven restore him,
From his pale, sweet sleep!
Those blue eyes of love and peace again
Through her soul will shine, undimm'd by pain.

Where the long reeds quiver,
Where the pines make moan,
Leave we by the river,
Earth to earth alone!
God and Father! may our journeyings on
Lead to where the blessed boy is gone!

From the exile's sorrow,
From the wanderer's dread
Of the night and morrow,
Early, brightly fled;
Thou hast call'd him to a sweeter home
Than our lost one o'er the ocean's foam.

Now let Thought behold him
With his angel look,
Where those arms enfold him,
Which benignly took
Israel's babes to their Good Shepherd's breast,
When his voice their tender meekness bless'd.

Turn thee, now, fond mother!
From thy dead, oh! turn!
Linger not, young brother,
Here to dream and mourn:
Only kneel once more around the sod,
Kneel, and bow submitted hearts to God!

MRS. HEMANS.

DIRGE OF A CHILD.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed one!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blush'd into dawn, and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub soul and form,
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower
That never felt a storm!
The sunbeam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That Heaven benignly call'd thee hence,
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence;
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art pass'd, with all thy loveliness!

Oh! hadst thou still on earth remain'd,
Vision of beauty! fair as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stain'd
With passion or with grief!
Now not a sullying breath can rise,
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,
No sculptured image there shall mourn;
Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorn'd with Nature's brightest wreath,
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe;
And oft, upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit! visit our repose,
And bear from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes!
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine to messenger of Heaven?

MRS. HEMANS.

THE CHILD'S LAST SLEEP

THOU sleepest—but when wilt thou wake, fair child,
—When the fawn awakes 'midst the forest wild?
When the lark's wing mounts with the breeze of morn,
When the first rich breath of the rose is born?
—Lovely thou sleepest, yet something lies
Too deep and still on thy soft-seal'd eyes;
Mournful, though sweet, is thy rest to see—
When will the hour of thy rising be?

Not when the fawn wakes, not when the lark
On the crimson cloud of the morn floats dark—
Grief with vain passionate tears hath wet
The hair, shedding gleams from thy pale brow yet;
Love with sad kisses unfelt hath prest
Thy meek dropt eyelids and quiet breast;
And the glad Spring, calling out bird and bee,
Shall colour all blossoms, fair child, but thee.

Thou'rt gone from us, bright one—that thou
should'st die,
And life be left to the butterfly.
Thou'rt gone, as a dew-drop is swept from the
bough,
—Oh! for the world where thy home is now!
How may we love but in doubt and fear,
How may we anchor our fond hearts here,
How should e'en Joy but a trembler be,
Beautiful dust! when we look on thee?

MRS. HEMANS.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT.

I LOVED thee, daughter of my heart;
My child, I loved thee dearly;
And though we only met to part,
—How sweetly! how severely!—
Nor life nor death can sever
My soul from thine for ever.

Thy days, my little one, were few;
An Angel's morning visit,
That came and vanish'd with the dew;
'Twas here, 't is gone, where is it?
Yet didst thou leave behind thee
A clue for love to find thee.

The eye, the lip, the cheek, the brow,
The hands stretch'd forth in gladness,
All life, joy, rapture, beauty now;
Then dash'd with infant-sadness;
Till, brightening by transition,
Return'd the fairy vision:—

Where are they now?—those smiles, those tears,
Thy mother's darling treasure?
She sees them still, and still she hears
Thy tones of pain or pleasure,
To her quick pulse revealing
Unutterable feeling.

Hush'd in a moment on her breast,
Life, at the well-spring drinking;
Then cradled on her lap to rest
In rosy slumber sinking,
Thy dreams—no thought can guess them;
And mine—no tongue express them.

For then this waking eye could see,
In many a vain vagary,
The things that never were to be,
Imaginations airy;
Fond hopes that mothers cherish,
Like still-born babes to perish.

Mine perish'd on thy early bier;
No,—changed to forms more glorious,
They flourish in a higher sphere,
O'er time and death victorious;
Yet would these arms have chain'd thee,
And long from heaven detain'd thee.

Sarah! my last, my youngest love,
The crown of every other!
Though thou art born in heaven above,
I am thine only Mother,
Nor will affection let me
Believe thou canst forget me.

Then,—thou in heaven and I on earth,—
May this one hope delight us,
That thou wilt hail my second birth,
When death shall reunite us,
Where worlds no more can sever
Parent and child for ever.

MONTGOMERY.

THE DEATH OF A CHILD AT DAY-BREAK.

"Let me go, for the day breaketh."—GEN. xxxi. 26.

CEASE here longer to detain me,
Kindest mother, drown'd in woe,
Now thy kind caresses pain me;
Morn advances—let me go.

See yon orient streak appearing,
Harbinger of endless day;
Hark! a voice, the darkness cheering,
Calls my new-born soul away!

Lately launch'd, a trembling stranger,
On this world's wild boisterous flood,
Exposed to pain and toss'd with danger,
Gladly I return to God.

Now my cries shall cease to grieve thee,
Now my trembling heart find rest;
Kinder arms than thine receive me,
Softer pillow than thy breast.

Weep not o'er these eyes that languish
Upward turn'd towards their home,
Raptured they'll forget all anguish
While they wait to see thee come.

There, my Mother, pleasures centre;—
Weeping, parting, care, or woe,
Ne'er our Father's house shall enter;—
Morn advances—let me go.

As through this calm and holy dawning,
Silent glides my parting breath
To an everlasting morning—
Gently close my eyes in Death.

Blessings, endless, richest blessings,
Pour their streams upon thy heart!
(Though no language yet possessing)
Breathes my spirit ere we part.

Yet to leave thee sorrowing grieves me,
Though again his voice I hear;
Rise! may every grace attend thee,
Rise! and seek to meet me there!

R. CECIL.

THE LITTLE SHROUD

SHE put him on a snow-white shroud,
A chaplet on his head,
And gathered early primroses
To scatter o'er the dead.

She laid him in his little grave,
('Twas hard to lay him there,)
When spring was putting forth its flowers,
And every thing was fair.

She had lost many children—now,
The last of them was gone;
And day and night she sat and wept
Beside the funeral stone.

One midnight, while her constant tears
Were falling with the dew,
She heard a voice, and lo! her child
Stood by her weeping too.

His shroud was damp, his face was white!
He said, "I cannot sleep,
Your tears have made my shroud so wet,
Oh, mother, do not weep!"

Oh, love is strong!—the mother's heart
Was fill'd with tender fears;
Oh, love is strong! and for her child
Her grief restrain'd its tears.

One eve a light shone round her bed,
And then she saw him stand—
Her infant in his little shroud,
A taper in his hand.

"Lo! mother, see, my shroud is dry,
And I can sleep once more!"
And beautiful the parting smile
The little infant wore.

And down within his silent grave,
He laid his weary head,
And soon the early violets
Grew o'er his grassy bed.

The mother went her household ways—
Again she knelt in prayer,
And only ask'd of Heaven its aid
Her heavy lot to bear.

MISS LANDON.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT OVER HER DEAD INFANT.

How can I weep? the tear of pain
Thy placid beauty would profane,
Darken thy cheek's unsullied snow,
And wet the white rose on thy brow.

How can I sigh! the breathing deep,
My baby, might disturb thy sleep;
And thou, with that unclouded smile,
Wouldst seem rebuking me the while.

How can I grieve, when all around
I hear a sweet unearthly sound?
The waving of my cherub's wings,
The hymn my infant-angel sings.

Yet lovely, tranquil as thou art,
It was so cruel to depart,
To close on me thy laughing eye,
Unclasp thy little arms, and die!

But one hath whisper'd, Love! to thee,
"Suffer my child to come to me."
Then, Saviour! meekly I resign
My baby, now for ever thine.

ANONYMOUS.

ON SEEING A DECEASED INFANT.

AND this is death! how cold and still,
And yet how lovely it appears!
Too cold to let the gazer smile,
And yet too beautiful for tears.
The sparkling eye no more is bright,
The cheek hath lost its roselike red;
And yet it is with strange delight
I stand and gaze upon the dead.

But when I see the fair wide brow,
Half shaded by the silken hair,
That never look'd so fair as now,
When life and health were laughing there,
I wonder not that grief should swell
So wildly upward in the breast,
And that strong passion once rebel,
That need not, cannot be suppress'd.

I wonder not that parents' eyes
In gazing thus grow cold and dim,
That burning tears and aching sighs
Are blended with the funeral hymn;
The spirit hath an earthly part,
That weeps when earthly pleasure flies,
And heaven would scorn the frozen heart
That melts not when the infant dies.

And yet why mourn? that deep repose
Shall never more be broke by pain;
Those lips no more in sighs unclose,
Those eyes shall never weep again.
For think not that the blushing flower
Shall wither in the churchyard sod,
'T was made to gild an angel's bower
Within the paradise of God.

Once more I gaze—and swift and far
The clouds of death in sorrow fly,
I see thee, like a new-born star,
Move up thy pathway in the sky:
The star hath rays serene and bright,
But cold and pale compared with thine;
For thy orb shines with heavenly light,
With beams unfading and divine.

Then let the burthen'd heart be free,
The tears of sorrow all be shed,
And parents calmly bend to see
The mournful beauty of the dead;
Thrice happy—that their infant bears
To heaven no darkening stains of sin;
And only breathed life's morning airs
Before its noonday storms begin.

Farewell! I shall not soon forget!
Although thy heart hath ceased to beat,
My memory warmly treasures yet
Thy features calm and mildly sweet;
But no, that look is not the last,
We yet may meet where seraphs dwell,
Where love no more deplores the past,
Nor breathes that withering word—farewell.

W. B. PEABODY.

REMEMBERED MUSIC.

THE father sat and watch'd his boy,
With all a father's woe;
Fled was the rosy light of joy,
And faded his young brow;
Dark shades were gathering o'er its grace,
And death was stamp'd on that sweet face.

And yet he linger'd still—at fits,
A brief reviving beam,
In melancholy beauty, flits
Across his cheek, that gleam
Deceives the father's throbbing heart,
To think perchance they may not part.

What soothes the little sufferer now?
Ah! music pours its strain,—
With smiles his dying features glow,
The child forgets his pain!
And his small feeble hand, with care,
Beats time to his own favourite air.

It play'd—that simple careless tune,
While numbers pass'd it by;
But ever, as those notes begun,
His pale cheek flush'd with joy;
And his bright eye his father's sought,
With all its childish pleasure fraught.

The organ past—and all forgot
The music fled away;
But the young sufferer knew the spot,
And the accustom'd day;
And ever, as it took its round,
His heart was soothed with that sweet sound.

But ah! glad strains, and tender cares,
From death may never save;
Soon torn from all sweet sounds, he shares,
The silence of the grave;
And, with a cold, and breaking heart,
The father sees his child depart.

He takes him to his tomb—and then,
All steep'd in speechless woe;
Returns unto his home again,
But not one tear will flow:
The lonely room—the vacant seat,
His eyes in silent stupor meet.

What stirs him from his deep despair,
What wakens all his heart?
It plays again—that simple air—
And tears like rain-drops start;

In every note—in every tone,
He feels his child again his own.

And thoughts of tenderness and love
Creep softly o'er his grief,
And draw his spirit far above
A world so sad and brief;
The airs of heaven are in his ear—
His child in angel-light is near!

Miss Roscoe.

THE CHRISTIAN'S JOY AMIDST SUFFERINGS.

The children of God are not called to so sad a life as the world imagines; besides what is laid up for them in heaven, they have, even here, their rejoicings and songs in their distresses, as those prisoners had their psalms even at midnight, after their stripes, and in their chains, before they knew of a sudden deliverance. (Acts xvi. 25.) True, there may be a darkness within, clouding all the matter of their joy, but even that darkness is the seed-time of after-joy: light is sown in that darkness, and shall spring up; and not only shall they have a rich crop at full harvest, but even some first fruits of it here, in pledge of the harvest.

And this they ought to expect, and to seek after with minds humble and submissive as to the measure and time of it, that they may be partakers of spiritual joy, and may by it be enabled to go patiently, yea, cheerfully, through the tribulations and temptations that lie in their way homeward. And for this end they ought to endeavour after a more clear discerning of their interest in Christ, that they may know they partake of Him, and so,

that in suffering they are partakers of His sufferings, and shall be partakers of His glory.

Many afflictions will not cloud and obstruct this, so much as one sin: therefore, if ye would walk cheerfully, be most careful to walk holily. All the winds about the earth make not an earthquake, but only that within.

Now this joy is grounded on this communion, [1.] in sufferings, then, [2.] in glory.

1. Even in sufferings themselves. It is a sweet, a joyful thing to be a sharer with Christ in anything. All enjoyments wherein He is not, are bitter to a soul that loves Him, and all sufferings with Him are sweet. The worst things of Christ are more truly delightful than the best things of the world; His afflictions are sweeter than their pleasures, His *reproach* more glorious than their honours, and more rich than their treasures, as Moses accounted them. Heb. xi. 26. Love delights in likeness and communion, not only in things otherwise pleasant, but in the hardest and harshest things, which have not any thing in them desirable, but only that likeness. So that this thought is very sweet to a heart possessed with this love: What does the world, by its hatred, and persecutions, and revilings for the sake of Christ, but make me more like Him, give me a greater share with Him, in that which He did so willingly undergo for me? *When He was sought for to be made a king*, as St. Bernard remarks, *He escaped; but when he was sought to be brought to the Cross, He freely yielded Himself.* And shall I shrink and creep back from what He calls me to suffer for His sake? Yea, even all my other troubles and sufferings, I will desire to have stamped thus, with this conformity to the suffer-

ings of Christ, in the humble, obedient, cheerful, endurance of them, and the giving up my will to my Father's.

The following of Christ makes any way pleasant. His faithful followers refuse no march after Him, be it through deserts, and mountains, and storms, and hazards, that will affright self-pleasing, easy spirits. Hearts kindled and actuated with the Spirit of Christ, will *follow Him wheresoever He goeth.*

As He speaks it for warning to His disciples, *If they persecute me, they will persecute you*, so He speaks it for comfort to them, and sufficient comfort it is, *If they hate you, they hated me before you*, John xv. 18, 20.

2. Then add the other: see whither it tends. *He shall be revealed in His glory*, and ye shall even overflow with joy in the partaking of that glory. Therefore, rejoice now in the midst of all your sufferings. Stand upon the advanced ground of the promises and the covenant of Grace, and by faith look beyond this moment, and all that is in it, to that day wherein *everlasting joy shall be upon your heads*, a crown of it, and *sorrow and mourning shall flee away.* Isa. li. 11. Believe in this day, and the victory is won. Oh! that blessed hope, well fixed and exercised, would give other manner of spirits. What zeal for God would it not inspire! What invincible courage against all encounters! How soon will this pageant of the world vanish, that men are gazing on, these pictures and fancies of pleasures and honours, falsely so called, and give place to the real glory of the sons of God, when this blessed Son, who is God, shall be seen appearing in full majesty, and all His brethren in glory with Him, all clothed in

their robes! And if you ask Who are they, Why, *these are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.* Rev. vii. 14.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

COMFORT IN AFFLICTION.

Oh! thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to thee!
The friends who in our sunshine live,
When winter comes, are flown;
And he who has but tears to give,
Must weep those tears alone;
But thou wilt heal that broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
And ev'n the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimm'd and vanish'd too!
Oh! who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not thy wing of love
Come brightly wafting through the gloom,
One Peace-branch from above?
Then sorrow, touch'd by thee, grows bright
With more than rapture's ray;
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day.

BROKEN-HEARTED, WEEP NO MORE.

BROKEN-HEARTED, weep no more!
Hear what comfort He hath spoken,
Smoking flax who ne'er hath quench'd,
Bruised reed who ne'er hath broken:—
"Ye who wander here below,
Heavy laden as you go,
Come, with grief, with sin oppress'd,
Come to me, and be at rest!"

Lamb of Jesus' blood-bought flock,
Brought again from sin and straying,
Hear the Shepherd's gentle voice—
'Tis a true and faithful saying:—
"Greater love how can there be
Than to yield up life for thee?
Bought with pang, and tear, and sigh,
Turn and live!—why will ye die?"

Broken-hearted, weep no more!
Far from consolation flying;
He who calls hath felt thy wound,
Seen thy weeping, heard thy sighing:—
"Bring thy broken heart to me;
Welcome offering it shall be;
Streaming tears, and bursting sighs,
Mine accepted sacrifice."

ANONYMOUS.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD AMIDST AFFLICTIONS.

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

NOTHING doth so much establish the mind amidst the rollings and turbulency of present things, as both a look above them, and a look beyond them; above them to the steady and good Hand by which they are ruled, and beyond them to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that Hand, they shall be brought. This the Apostle lays here as the foundation of that patience and peace in troubles, wherewith he would have his brethren furnished. And thus he closes this chapter in these words: *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

The words contain the true principle of Christian patience and tranquillity of mind in the sufferings of this life, expressing both wherein it consists, and what are the grounds of it.

I. It lies in this, *committing the soul unto God.* The word which is added, is a true qualification of this, that it be *in well-doing*, according to the preceding doctrine, which the Apostle gives clearly and largely, *ver.* 15, 16. If men would have inward peace amidst outward trouble, they must walk by the rule of peace, and keep strictly to it. If you would commit your soul to the keeping of God, know that He is a holy God, and an unholy soul that walks in any way of wickedness, whether known or secret, is no fit commodity to put into His pure hand to keep. Therefore as you would

have this confidence to give your holy God the keeping of your soul, and that He may accept of it, and take it off your hand, beware of wilful pollutions and unholy ways. Walk so you may not discredit your Protector, and move Him to be ashamed of you, and disclaim you. Shall it be said that you live under His shelter, and yet walk inordinately? As this cannot well be, you cannot well believe it to be. Loose ways will loosen your hold of Him, and confidence in Him. You will be driven to question your interest, and to think, Surely, I do but delude myself: can I be under His safeguard, and yet follow the course of the world, and my corrupt heart? Certainly, let who will be so, HE will not be a guardian and patron of wickedness. No, *He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with Him.* Psal. v. 4. If thou give thy soul to him to keep, upon the terms of liberty to sin, He will turn it out of His doors, and remit it back to thee to look to as thou wilt thyself. Yea, in the ways of sin, thou dost indeed steal it back, and carriest it out from Him; thou puttest thyself out of the compass of His defence, goest without the trenches, and art, at thine own hazard, exposed to armies of mischiefs and miseries.

Inference. This, then, is primarily to be looked to; you that would have safety in God, in evil times, beware of evil ways; for in these it cannot be. If you will be safe in Him, you must stay with Him, and in all your ways, keep within Him *as your fortress.* Now, in the ways of sin you run out from Him.

Hence it is we have so little established confidence in God in times of trial. We take ways of our own, and will be gadding, and so we

are surprised and taken, as they that are often venturing out into the enemy's reach, and cannot stay within the walls. It is no idle repetition, Psal. xci. 1 : *He that dwelleth in the secret places of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* He that wanders not, but stays there, shall find himself there hidden from danger. They that rove out from God in their ways, are disquieted and tossed with fears; this is the *fruit of their own ways;* but the soul that is indeed given to Him to keep, keeps near Him.

Study pure and holy walking, if you would have your confidence firm, and have boldness and joy in God. You will find that a little sin will shake your trust, and disturb your peace, more than the greatest sufferings, yea, in those sufferings, your assurance and joy in God will grow and abound most, if sin be kept out. That is the trouble-feast that disquiets the conscience, which while it continues good, is a *continual feast.* So much sin as gets in, so much peace will go out. Afflictions cannot break in upon to break it, but sin doth. All the winds which blow about the earth from all points, stir it not; only that within the bowels of it makes the earthquake.

I do not mean that for infirmities a Christian ought to be discouraged. But take heed of walking in any way of sin, for that will unsettle thy confidence. Innocency and holy walking make the soul of a sound constitution, which the counterblasts of affliction wear not out, nor alter. Sin makes it so sickly and crazy, that it can endure nothing. Therefore, study to keep your consciences pure, and they shall be peaceable, yea, in the worst of times commonly most peaceable and

best furnished with spiritual confidence and comfort.

Commit the keeping of their souls. The Lord is an entire protector. He keeps the bodies, yea, all that belongs to the Believer, and, as much as is good for him, makes all safe, *keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken*, Psal. xxxiv. 18; yea, says our Saviour, *The very hairs of your head are numbered.* Matt. x. 30. But that which, as in the Believer's account, and in God's account, so, certainly in itself is most precious, is principally committed and received into His keeping, *their souls.* They would most gladly be secured in that here, and that shall be safe in the midst of all hazards. Their chief concern is, that, whatsoever be lost, this may not; this is the jewel, and therefore, the prime care is of this. If the soul be safe, all is well; it is riches enough. *What shall it profit a man, though he gain the whole world,* says our Saviour, *and lose his own soul?* Mark viii. 36. And so, what shall it disprofit a man, though he lose the whole world, if he gain his soul? Nothing at all.

When times of trial come, oh, what a bustle to hide this and that; to flee, and carry away and make safe that which is but trash and rubbish to the precious soul; but how few thoughts of that! Were we in our wits, that would be all at all times, not only in trouble, but in days of peace. Oh, how shall I make sure about my soul? Let all go as it may, can I but be secured and persuaded in that point, I desire no more.

Now, the way is this, *commit them to God:* this many say, but few do. Give them into His hand, *lay them up* there (so the word is,) and they are safe, and may be quiet and composed.

In patience possess your souls, says our Saviour, Luke xxiv. 19. Impatient, fretting souls, are out of themselves; their owners do not possess them. Now, the way to possess them ourselves in patience, is, thus to commit them to him in confidence; for then only we possess them, when He keeps them. They are easily disquieted and shaken in pieces while they are in our own hands, but in His hand, they are above the reach of dangers and fears.

Inference. Learn from hence, what is the proper act of Faith; it rolls the soul over on God, ventures it in His hand, and rests satisfied concerning it, being there. And there is no way but this, to be quiet within, to be impregnable and immoveable in all assaults, and fixed in all changes, believing in His free love. Therefore, be persuaded to resolve on that;—not doubting and disputing, Whether shall I believe or not? Shall I think He will suffer me to lay my soul upon Him to keep, so unworthy, so guilty a soul? Were it not presumption!—Oh, what sayest thou? Why dost thou thus dishonour Him, and disquiet thyself! If thou hast a purpose to walk in any way of wickedness, indeed thou art not for Him; yea, thou comest not near Him to give Him thy soul. But wouldst thou have it delivered from sin, rather than from trouble, yea, rather than from hell? Is that the chief safety thou seekest, to be kept from iniquity, from thine own iniquity, thy beloved sins? Dost thou desire to dwell in Him, and walk with Him? Then, whatsoever be thy guiltiness and unworthiness, come forward, and give Him thy soul to keep. If He should seem to refuse it, press it on Him. If He stretch not forth His hand, lay it down at His foot, and leave it there, and resolve not to take

it back. Say, Lord, Thou hast made us these souls, Thou callest for them again to be committed to Thee; here is one. It is unworthy, but what soul is not so? It is most unworthy, but therein will the riches of Thy grace appear most in receiving it. And thus leave it with Him, and know He will make thee a good account of it. Now, should you lose goods, or credit, or friends, or life itself, it imports not; the main concern is sure, if so be thy soul is out of hazard. *I suffer these things for the Gospel*, says the Apostle: *nevertheless, I am not ashamed*—Why?—*for I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day.* 2 Tim. i. 12.

The *ground* of this confidence, is in these two things, the *ability* and the *fidelity* of Him in whom we trust. There is much in a persuasion of the power of God. Though few think they question that, there is in us secret, undiscovered unbelief, even in that point. Therefore the Lord so often makes mention of it in the Prophets. See Isa. l. 3, &c. And, in this point, the Apostle Paul is particularly express: *I am persuaded that He is able to keep, &c.* So this Apostle: *Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.* Ch. i. ver. 5. This is very needful to be considered, in regard of the many and great oppositions, and dangers, and powerful enemies, that seek after our souls: *He is able to keep them, for He is stronger than all, and none can pluck them out of His hand*, says our Saviour. John x. 29. This the Apostle here implies in that word, *Creator;* if He was able to give them being, surely He is able to keep them from perishing. This relation of a Creator, implies

likewise a benign propension and good-will to the works of His hands: if He gave them us at first, when once they were not, forming them out of nothing, will He not give us them again, being put into His hand for safety?

And as He is powerful, He is no less faithful, *a faithful Creator*, Truth itself. Those who believe on Him, He never deceives or disappoints. Well might St. Paul say, *I know whom I have trusted.* Oh, the advantage of faith! It engages the truth and the power of God: His royal word and honour lies upon it, to preserve the soul that Faith gives Him in keeping. If He remain able and faithful to perform His word, that soul shall not perish.

There be in the words, other two grounds of quietness of spirit in sufferings. [1.] It is according to the will of God. The believing soul, subjected and levelled to that will, complying with His good pleasure in all, cannot have a more powerful persuasive than this, that all is ordered by His will. This settled in the heart would settle it much, and make it even in all things; not only to know, but wisely and deeply to consider, that it is thus, that all is measured in Heaven, every drachm of thy troubles weighed by that skilful Hand, which doth all things by weight, number, and measure.

And then, consider Him, as thy God and Father, who hath taken special charge of thee, and of thy soul: thou hast given it to Him, and He hath received it. And, upon this consideration, study to follow His will in all, to have no will but His. This is thy duty, and thy wisdom. Nothing is gained by spurning and struggling, but to hurt and vex thyself; but by complying, all is gained

—sweet peace. It is the very secret, the mystery of solid peace within, to resign all to His will, to be disposed of at His pleasure, without the least contrary thought. And thus, like two-faced pictures, those sufferings and troubles, and whatsoever else, while beheld on the one side as painful to the flesh, hath an unpleasant visage, yet go about a little, and look upon it as thy Father's will, and then it is smiling, beautiful, and lovely. This I would recommend to you, not only for temporals, as easier there, but in spiritual things, your comforts and sensible enlargements, to love all that He does. It is the sum of Christianity, to have thy will crucified, and the will of thy Lord thy only desire. Whether joy or sorrow, sickness or health, life or death, in all, in all, *Thy will be done.*

The other ground of quietness is contained in the first word, which looks back on the foregoing discourse, *Wherefore*—what? Seeing that your reproachings and sufferings are not endless, yea, that they are short, they shall end, quickly end, and end in glory, be not troubled about them, overlook them. The eye of faith will do it. A moment gone, and what are they? This is the great cause of our disquietness in present troubles and griefs; we forget their end. We are affected by our condition in this present life, as if it were all, and it is nothing. Oh, how quickly shall all the enjoyments, and all the sufferings of this life pass away, and be as if they had not been!

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists—one only:—an assured belief,
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturb'd, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents—converting them to good.
—The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat
Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the Will Supreme,
For time and for eternity; by faith,
Faith absolute in God, including hope,
And the defence that lies in boundless love
Of His perfections; with habitual dread
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
Impatiently, ill done, or left undone,
To the dishonour of His holy name.
Soul of our souls, and safeguard of the world!
Sustain—Thou only canst—the sick of heart;
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto thee and thine!

* * * * * * * *

'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise; but to converse with Heaven—
This is not easy: to relinquish all
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,
And stand in freedom loosen'd from this world,
I deem not arduous;—but must needs confess,
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the Soul's desires;
And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
Heights which the soul is competent to gain.

—Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
Want due consistence; like a pillar of smoke,
That, with majestic energy, from earth
Rises; but, having reach'd the thinner air,
Melts and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
From this infirmity of mortal kind,
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not;—at least,
If grief be something hallow'd and ordain'd—
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
Through this 't is able to maintain its hold,
In that excess which conscience disapproves.
For who would sink and settle to that point
Of selfishness? so senseless who could be
In framing estimates of loss and gain,
As long and perseveringly to mourn
For any object of his love, removed
From this unstable world, if he could fix
A satisfying view upon that state
Of pure, imperishable blessedness,
Which Reason promises, and Holy Writ
Insures to all believers? Yet, mistrust
Is of such incapacity, methinks,
No natural branch; despondency far less.
—And, if there be whose tender frames have droop'd
Even to the dust; apparently, through weight
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power,
An agonizing sorrow to transmute,
Infer not hence a hope from those withheld,
When wanted most; a confidence impaired
So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
Oh, no! full oft the innocent sufferer sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs

To realize the vision, with intense
And over-constant yearning;—there, there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.
I, speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor rapt nor craving, but in settled peace,
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
Hope below this, consists not with belief
In perfect wisdom, guiding, mightiest power,
That finds no limits but its own pure will.

But, above all, the victory is most sure
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience; conscience reverenced and obey'd,
As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
And His most perfect image in the world.
—Endeavour thus to live; these rules regard;
These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
Ere disencumber'd of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quell'd and trouble chased away;
With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire;
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave.

WORDSWORTH.

CONSOLATION FOR THE LONELY.

THERE is a land where beauty cannot fade,
Nor sorrow dim the eye;
Where true love shall not droop, nor be dismay'd,
And none shall ever die!
Where is that land, oh where?
For I would hasten there!
Tell me,—I fain would go,
For I am wearied with a heavy woe!
The beautiful have left me all alone;
The true, the tender, from my path are gone!
Oh guide me with thy hand,
If thou dost know that land,
For I am burden'd with oppressive care,
And I am weak and fearful with despair!
Where is it? tell me where.

Friend, thou must trust in Him who trod before
The desolate paths of life;
Must bear in meekness as he meekly bore
Sorrow, and pain, and strife!
Think how the Son of God
These thorny paths hath trod;
Think how he long'd to go,
Yet tarried out for thee the appointed woe:
Think of his weariness in places dim,
When no man comforted or cared for him!
Think of the blood like sweat
With which his brow was wet,
Yet how he pray'd, unaided and alone,
In that great agony, "Thy will be done!"
Friend, do not thou despair,
Christ from his heaven of heavens will hear thy prayer!

MRS. HOWITT.

RELIGION THE BEST SUPPORT AMIDST THE DISTRESSES OF LIFE.

Consider religion in the light of consolation, as bringing aid and relief to us, amidst the distresses of life. Here it incontestably triumphs; and its happy effects in this respect, furnish a strong argument to every benevolent mind, for wishing them to be further diffused throughout the world. For, without the belief and hope afforded by divine revelation, the circumstances of man are extremely forlorn. He finds himself placed here as a stranger in a vast universe, where the powers and operations of nature are very imperfectly known; where both the beginnings and the issues of things are involved in mysterious darkness: where he is unable to discover, with any certainty, whence he sprung, or for what purpose he was brought into this state of existence; whether he be subjected to the government of a mild, or of a wrathful ruler; what construction he is to put on many of the dispensations of his providence; and what his fate is to be when he departs hence. What a disconsolate situation to a serious, inquiring mind! The greater degree of virtue it possesses, its sensibility is likely to be the more oppressed by this burden of labouring thought. Even though it were in one's power to banish all uneasy thought, and to fill up the hours of life with perpetual amusement; life so filled up would, upon reflection, appear poor and trivial. But these are far from being the terms upon which man is brought into this world. He is conscious that his being is frail and feeble; he sees himself beset with various dangers, and is ex-

posed to many a melancholy apprehension, from the evils which he may have to encounter before he arrives at the close of life. In this distressed condition, to reveal to him such discoveries of the Supreme Being as the Christian religion affords, is to reveal to him a father and a friend; is to let in a ray of the most cheering light upon the darkness of the human estate. He who was before a destitute orphan, wandering in the inhospitable desert, has now gained a shelter from the bitter and inclement blast. He now knows to whom to pray, and in whom to trust; where to unbosom his sorrows, and from what hand to look for relief.

It is certain, that when the heart bleeds from some wound of recent misfortune, nothing is of equal efficacy with religious comfort. It is of power to enlighten the darkest hour, and to assuage the severest woe, by the belief of a divine favour, and the prospect of a blessed immortality. In such hopes, the mind expatiates with joy; and when bereaved of its earthly friends, solaces itself with the thoughts of one Friend, who will never forsake it. —Refined reasonings, concerning the nature of the human condition, and the improvement which philosophy teaches us to make of every event, may entertain the mind when it is at ease; may, perhaps, contribute to soothe it, when slightly touched with sorrow; but when it is torn with any sore distress, they are cold and feeble, compared with a direct promise from the word of God. This is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This has given consolation and refuge to many a virtuous heart, at a time when the most cogent reasonings would have proved utterly unavailing.

Upon the approach of death especially, when, if

a man thinks at all, his anxiety about his future interests must naturally increase, the power of religious consolation is sensibly felt. Then appears, in the most striking light, the high value of the discoveries made by the gospel; not only life and immortality revealed, but a mediator with God discovered; mercy proclaimed, through him, to the frailties of the penitent and the humble; and His presence promised to be with them when they are passing through the valley of the shadow of death, in order to bring them safe into unseen habitations of rest and joy. Here is ground for their leaving the world with comfort and peace. But in this severe and trying period, this labouring hour of nature, how shall the unhappy man support himself, who knows not, or believes not, the hope of religion? Secretly conscious to himself, that he has not acted his part as he ought to have done, the sins of his past life arise before him in sad remembrance. He wishes to exist after death, and yet dreads that existence. The Governor of the world is unknown. He cannot tell whether every endeavour to obtain His mercy may not be in vain. All is awful obscurity around him; and in the midst of endless doubts and perplexities, the trembling reluctant soul is forced away from the body. As the misfortunes of life must, to such a man, have been most oppressive; so its end is bitter: his sun sets in a dark cloud; and the night of death closes over his head full of misery.

BLAIR.

CONSOLATION.

It is not when the parting breath, we watch with anxious heart,
It is not in the hour of death, when those we love depart,
Nor yet when laid upon the bier, we follow slow the corse,
And leave it in its dwelling dark, that most we feel the loss.

When past the last, the solemn rite, and dust to dust hath gone,
And in its wonted channell'd course, the stream of time rolls on,
Oh, who can tell how drear the space, once fill'd by those most dear,
When viewed the scenes which they have loved, and all but they are here!

This deep, this heart-felt loneliness, this quietness of grief,
Falls heavier on the flower of joy, than tempests strong but brief,
Though whirlwinds tear the blossom fair, yet still the stem may thrive,
But wintry night's chill with'ring blight scarce leaves the root alive.

Yet as our earthly pleasures fade, if plants of purer peace
Spring in our bosom's wilderness, and nurtured there increase,
And humble hope, and holy fear, our wounded bosoms fill,
They'll teach us all the blessedness of yielding to his will.

Then seek not hours of sober grief, or sorrowing
thought, to shun,
Until we feel that we can say, "Thy will, not mine,
be done,"
And then our hearts to him will pay our homage
pure and warm,
Who saw the cloud o'er those we loved, and housed
them from the storm.

THE ANGELS' CALL.

"Hark they whisper! angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!"

Come to the land of peace!
Come where the tempest hath no longer sway,
The shadow passes from the soul away,
The sounds of weeping cease!

Fear hath no dwelling there!
Come to the mingling of repose and love,
Breathed by the silent spirit of the dove
Through the celestial air!

Come to the bright and blest,
And crown'd for ever!—'midst that shining band,
Gather'd to Heaven's own wreath from every land,
Thy spirit shall find rest!

Thou hast been long alone:
Come to thy mother!—on the Sabbath shore,
The heart that rock'd thy childhood, back, once
more,
Shall take its wearied one.

In silence wert thou left;
Come to thy sisters;—joyously again
All the home-voices, blent in one sweet strain,
Shall greet their long bereft!

Over thine orphan head
The storm hath swept, as o'er a willow's bough:
Come to thy father!—it is finish'd now:
Thy tears have all been shed

In thy divine abode
Change finds no pathway, memory no dark trace,
And oh! bright victory—death by love no place;
Come, Spirit, to thy God!

MRS. HEMANS.

THE DYING MAN.

IT is a very terrible and amazing thing to see a man die, and solemnly take his last leave of the world. The very circumstances of dying men are apt to strike us with horror. To hear such a man, how sensibly he will speak of the other world, as if he were just come from it, rather than going to it; how severely he will condemn himself for the folly and wickedness of his life; with what passion he will wish that he had lived better, and had served God more sincerely; how seriously he will resolve upon a better life, if God would be pleased to raise him up, and try him but once more; with what zeal and earnestness he will commend to his best friends and nearest relations a religious and virtuous course of life, as the only thing that will minister comfort to them when they come to be in his condition. Such discourses as these are very

apt to move and affect men for the time, and to stir up in them very good resolutions, whilst the present fit and impression lasts; but because these sights are very frequent, they have seldom any great permanent effect upon men. They consider that it is a very common case, and sinners take example and encouragement from one another; every one is affected for the present, few are so effectually convinced as to betake themselves to a better course.

TILLOTSON.

COMPARISON BETWEEN A DYING PAGAN AND A DYING CHRISTIAN.

I CONSIDER a Pagan, in his dying-bed, speaking to himself what follows: On which side soever I consider my state, I perceive nothing but trouble and despair. If I observe the forerunners of death, I see awful symptoms, violent sickness, and intolerable pain, which surround my sick-bed, and are the first scenes of the bloody tragedy. As to the world, my dearest objects disappear; my closest connections are dissolving; my most specious titles are effacing; my noblest privileges are vanishing away; a dismal curtain falls between my eyes and all the decorations of the universe. In regard to my body, it is a mass without motion and life; my tongue is about to be condemned to eternal silence; my eyes to perpetual darkness; all the organs of my body to entire dissolution; and the miserable remains of my carcase to lodge in the grave, and to become food for the worms. If I consider my soul, I scarcely know whether it be immortal; and could I demonstrate its natural im-

mortality, I should not be able to say whether my Creator would display his attributes in preserving or in destroying it; whether my wishes for immortality be the dictates of nature, or the language of sin. If I consider my past life, I have a witness within me, attesting that my practice hath been less than my knowledge, how small soever the latter hath been; and that the abundant depravity of my heart hath thickened the darkness of my mind. If I consider futurity, I think I discover through many thick clouds a future state; my reason suggests, that the Author of Nature hath not given me a soul so sublime in thought, and so expansive in desire, merely to move in this little orb for a moment: but this is nothing but conjecture; and if there be another economy after this, should I be less miserable than I am here? One moment I hope for annihilation, the next I shudder with the fear of being annihilated; my thoughts and desires are at war with each other; they rise, they resist, they destroy one another. Such is the dying Heathen. If a few examples of those who have died otherwise, be adduced, they ought not to be urged in evidence against what we have advanced; for they are rare, and very probably deceptive, their outward tranquillity being only a concealment of trouble within. Trouble is the greater for confinement within, and for an affected appearance without. As we ought not to believe that philosophy hath rendered men insensible of pain, because some philosophers have maintained that pain is no evil, and have seemed to triumph over it: so neither ought we to believe, that it hath disarmed death in regard to the disciples of natural religion, because some have affirmed that death is not an object of fear. After all, if some Pagans

enjoyed a real tranquillity at death, it was a groundless tranquillity, to which reason contributed nothing at all.

O! how differently do Christians die! How doth revealed religion triumph over the religion of nature in this respect! May each of our hearers be a new evidence of this article! The whole that troubles an expiring Heathen, revives a Christian in his dying bed.

Thus speaks the dying Christian. When I consider the awful symptoms of death, and the violent agonies of dissolving nature, they appear to me as medical preparations, sharp, but salutary; they are necessary to detach me from life, and to separate the remains of inward depravity from me. Beside, I shall not be abandoned to my own frailty; but my patience and constancy will be proportional to my sufferings, and that powerful arm which hath supported me through life, will uphold me under the pressure of death. If I consider my sins, many as they are, I am invulnerable; for I go to a tribunal of mercy, where God is reconciled, and justice is satisfied. If I consider my body, I perceive I am putting off a mean and corruptible habit, and putting on robes of glory. Fall, fall, ye imperfect senses, ye frail organs; fall, house of clay, into your original dust: ye will be 'sown in corruption, but raised in incorruption; sown in dishonour, but raised in glory; sown in weakness, but raised in power.' If I consider my soul, it is passing, I see, from slavery to freedom. I shall carry with me, that which thinks and reflects. I shall carry with me the delicacy of taste, the harmony of sounds, the beauty of colours, the fragrance of odoriferous smells. I shall surmount heaven and earth, nature and all terrestrial things, and my ideas of all

their beauties will multiply and expand. If I consider the future economy, to which I go, I have, I own, very inadequate notions of it: but my incapacity is the ground of my expectation. Could I perfectly comprehend it, it would argue its resemblance to some of the present objects of my senses, or its minute proportion of the present operations of my mind. If worldly dignities and grandeurs, if accumulated treasures, if the enjoyments of the most refined voluptuousness, were to represent to me celestial felicity, I should suppose, that partaking of their nature, they partook of their vanity. But, if nothing here can represent the future state, it is because that state surpasseth every other. My ardour is increased by my imperfect knowledge of it. My knowledge and virtue, I know, will be perfected; I know I shall comprehend truth, and obey order; I know I shall be free from all evils, and in possession of all good; I shall be present with God, I know, and with all the happy spirits who surround his throne; and this perfect state, I am sure, will continue for ever and ever.

Such are the all-sufficient supports which revealed religion affords against the fear of death. Such are the meditations of a dying Christian; not of one whose whole Christianity consists of dry speculations, which have no influence over his practice; but of one who applies his knowledge to relieve the real wants of his life.

SAURIN.

DYING THOUGHTS OF THE AUTHOR OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

AFTER this manner spake the author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, immediately before he expired:

I have lived to see, that this world is made up of perturbations; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near. And though I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence towards him, and towards all men; yet, 'if thou, Lord, shouldest be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it?' And, therefore, where I have failed, Lord, show mercy to me, for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, through his merits, who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible, and then take thine own time; I submit to it—'Let not mine, O Lord, but thy will, be done!'—God hath heard my daily petitions; for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me. From such blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me. My conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live, to do the church more service, but cannot hope it: 'for my days are past, as a shadow that returns not.'

His worthy biographer adds—

More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him; and, after a short conflict between nature and death, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so he fell asleep—and now he seems to rest like Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

HORNE.

HAPPY MOMENTS.

THERE are some happy moments in this lone
And desolate world of ours, that well repay
The toil of struggling through it, and atone
For many a long, sad night, and weary day.
They come upon the mind like some mild air
Of distant music, when we know not where,
Or whence the sounds are brought from, and their pow'r,
Though brief, is boundless.

HALLECK.

THE LAST HOUR.

OF all the periods and events of life, the concluding scene is one of deepest interest to the person himself, and to surviving friends. Various are the ways in which it comes, but in all it is solemn. What can be more so, than the approach of that moment, which to the dying man, is the boundary between time and eternity; which finishes the one, and begins the other; which closes his interests in this world, and fixes his condition for a never-ending existence in the world unknown! What can be more so, than these moments of silent and indescribable anxiety, when the last sands of the numbered hour are running; when the beat of the heart has become languid; when the cold hand returns not the gentle pressure; when the weary limbs lie still and motionless; when the eye is fixed, and the ear turns no more towards the voice of consoling kindness; when the breath, before oppressive and laborious, becomes feebler and feebler, till it dies slowly away; and to the

listener there is no sound amidst the breathless silence; when surrounding friends continue to speak in whispers, and to step through the chamber softly, as if still fearful of disturbing him,—whom the noise of a thousand thunders could not now startle,—who has fallen on that last sleep, from which nothing shall rouse, but "the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God."

WARDLAW.

OUR BODIES NOT OURSELVES.

OUR gross organized bodies, with which we perceive the objects of sense, and with which we act, are no part of ourselves. We see, by experience, that men may lose their limbs, their organs of sense, and even the greatest part of their bodies, and yet remain the same living agents.

We have already, several times over, lost a great part, or perhaps the whole of our body, according to certain established laws of nature; yet we remain the same living agents; when we shall lose as great a part, or the whole, by another established law of nature, death, why may we not also remain the same? We have passed undestroyed through those many and great revolutions of matter so peculiarly appropriated to us ourselves; why should we imagine death will be so fatal to us?

Common optical experiments show, and even the observation how sight is assisted by glasses shows, that we see with our eyes in the same sense as we see with glasses. Nor is there any reason to believe, that we see with them in any other sense; any other, I mean, which would lead us to think the eye itself a percipient. The like is to be said

of hearing; and our feeling distant solid matter by means of something in our hand, seems an instance of the like kind, as to the subject we are considering. There are instances of foreign matter, or such as is no part of our body, being instrumental in preparing objects for, and conveying them to the perceiving power, in a manner like to that in which our organs of sense prepare and convey them. Glasses are evidently instances of this,—of matter, which is no part of our body, preparing objects for, and conveying them towards the perceiving power, in like manner as our bodily organs do. And if we see with our eyes only in the same manner as we see with our glasses, the like may justly be concluded, from analogy, of all our other senses.

So also, with regard to our power of moving,—upon the destruction of a limb this active power remains unlessened; so as that the living being who has suffered this loss, would be capable of moving as before, if it had another limb to move with. It can walk by the help of an artificial leg; just as it can make use of a pole or lever, to reach towards itself, and to move things, beyond the length and power of its natural arm. There is not so much as an appearance of our limbs being endowed with a power of moving or directing themselves.

Thus a man determines, that he will look at such an object through a microscope; or, being lame, supposes that he will walk to such a place with a staff a week hence. His eyes and his feet no more determine in these cases, than the microscope, and the staff. Nor is there any ground to think they any more put the determination in practice; or, that his eyes are the seers, or his feet the movers,

in any other sense than as the microscope and the staff are. Upon the whole, then, our organs of sense, and our limbs, are certainly instruments which the living persons ourselves make use of to perceive and move with. Nor is there any probability, that the alienation, or dissolution of these instruments is the destruction of the perceiving and moving agent.

BISHOP BUTLER.

CONSOLATION.

THEY who would always rejoice, must derive their joy from a source which is invariably the same; in other words, from Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." O that name! what a person! what an office, what a life, what a love, what a death, does it recall to our minds! Let us leave our troubles to themselves awhile, let us walk to Golgotha, and take a view of his. We stop, as we are going, at Gethsemane, for it is not a step out of the road. There he lies bleeding, though not wounded; or if wounded, it is by an invisible almighty hand. Now I begin to see what sin has done. Now let me bring my sorrows, and compare, measure and weigh them against the sorrows of my Saviour! Foolish attempt! To weigh a mote against a mountain!

> "Now let our pains be all forgot,
> Our hearts no more repine;
> Our sufferings are not worth a thought,
> When, Lord, compared with thine!"

We are still more confounded at our next station; now we are at the foot of the cross. Behold the man! listen to his groans! contemplate his

wounds! Now let us sit down, and weep over our crosses if we can. For our crosses! Nay, let us weep over our sins, which brought the Son of God into such distress. I feel, that we, not he, deserved to be crucified, and utterly forsaken. For a fuller proof, let us take another station. Now we are at his tomb. But he is not here, he is risen; the debt is paid, and the surety is discharged. Not here! Where then is he? Look up! methinks the clouds part, and glory breaks through them; behold a throne! what a transition! He who hung upon the cross is seated on the throne. Hark! he says, "I know your sorrows; yea, I appoint them; they are tokens of my love; it is thus I call you to the honour of following me. See, a place prepared for you near to myself. Fear none of these things. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!"

It is enough, Lord! Now, then, let us calculate again. These scales are the balances of the sanctuary; let us put in our griefs and trials on one side; what an alteration! I thought them lately very heavy; now I find them light; the scale hardly turns with them. But how shall we manage to put in the weight on the other side? It is heavy indeed; an inconceivable, "an eternal weight of glory." It is beyond my grasp and power. I see, with a glance of my eye, that there is no proportion between this felicity and my sorrows. I am content, I am satisfied, I am ashamed. From this moment I wipe away my tears, and forbid them to flow; or, if I must weep, they shall be tears of love, gratitude, and joy.

NEWTON.

CONSOLATORY THOUGHTS.

God doth but cast us down, to raise us up, and empty us, that he may fill us, and melt us, that we may be vessels of glory; loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while.

It is unthankfulness to forget our consolation, and to look only upon matter of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses, as to forget a hundred blessings.

True Religion, if we possess it, will bring comforts into our minds above our crosses.

In all storms, there is sea-room enough in the infinite goodness of God, for faith to be carried with full sail.

We faint not in affliction, saith Paul; but wherefore doth he not faint? Because the light and short afflictions work out "an exceeding weight of glory."

None ever have been so good and so great, or have raised themselves so high, as to be above the reach of troubles. Our Lord was "a man of sorrows."

It is no wonder, that those who are born soldiers should meet with conflicts; for travellers to meet with hard fare; for mariners to encounter with storms; or for strangers, in a strange land, especially among enemies, to meet with strange entertainment.

Whence proceed these complaints? Such a friend has failed me,—I never thought to have fallen into this condition,—I had settled my joy in this child, in this friend, etc. This is to rest our comfort on things that have no firm foundation, and to build castles in the air.

There is a perfect rest for God's people, both for soul and body, but it is not in this world. Here we are on the ocean; and we should not be surprised if we meet with storms.

Speak to God the Saviour, by prayer, that as he rebuked the winds and the waves, and went upon the sea, that so he would command a calm upon our spirits.

Come to this point at once. Trust God I ought; therefore, trust God I will,—come what may. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

A man can be in no condition wherein God is at a loss, and cannot help him: if comforts be wanting, he can create comforts, not only out of nothing, but out of discomforts. The trouble which we think will swallow us up, may be a means to bring us to our haven; so mighty is God in power, and so "excellent in working."

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth without any other foundation, hangs in the midst of the universe; therefore, well may the soul stay itself on that, even when it hath nothing else in sight to rely on. By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and of the preservation of the world from any further overflowing of waters, continueth; which, if it should fail, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firm for ever, though the whole frame of nature were dissolved.

SIBBS.

CONSOLATION SOUGHT AND FOUND.

When the clouds of desolation
Gather o'er my naked head,
And my spirit's agitation
Knows not where to turn or tread;
When life's gathering storms compel me
To submit to wants and woes,
Who shall teach me, who shall tell me
Where my heart may find repose.

To the stars I fain would reach me,
There the God of light must dwell:
Sacred teachers! will ye teach me?
Blest instructors! will ye tell?
How my voice may reach that portal
Where the seraphs crowd in throngs;
How the lispings of a mortal
May be heard 'midst angel songs!

God and Father! Thou didst give me
Sorrow for my portion here;
But thy mercy will not leave me
Helpless, struggling with despair;
For to Thee, when sad and lonely,
Unto Thee, alone, I turn,
And to Thee, my Father! only
Look for comfort when I mourn.

Nor in vain—for light is breaking
'Midst the sorrows, 'midst the storms;
And methinks I see awaking
Heavenly hopes and angel forms;
And my spirit waxes stronger,
And my trembling heart is still;
And my bosom doubts no longer
Thine inexplicable will.

J. Bowring.

DEPARTED FRIENDS.

Our friends who have left us,—where are they? not lost, not perished. We are sure, that to them, to whom to live it was Christ, to die will be gain. Where are they? They are where they are perpetually and perfectly blessed in the immediate vision and enjoyment of God, within the veil; infinitely more happy where they are, than where they were. Where are they? Why, they are in the mansions of light and bliss, that are in our Father's house above, in the paradise of God, where they hunger no more, nor thirst any more. They are in the best company, employed in the best work, and enjoying a complete satisfaction. Where are they? Why, they are where there are no complaints; nothing to interrupt their communion with God, or cast a damp upon their spirits. Death has done that for them which ordinances could not do; has perfectly freed them from that body of sin and death, which was here their constant burden, and hath set them for ever out of the reach of temptation. The spirits of the just are there made perfect, beyond the perfection of Adam in innocency, for they are immutably confirmed in it. Where are they? Why, they are where they would be; in their centre, in their element. They are where they longed to be; in that blessed state, towards which, while they were here, they were still reaching forth, and pressing forward.

M. Henry.

I HAVE BORNE CHASTISEMENT.

THE speaking this unto God under affliction, signifies, that our affliction is from His hand; and to the acknowledgment of this truth, the very natural consciences of men do incline them. Though trouble be the general lot of mankind, yet it doth not come on him by an improvidential fatality: though *man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards*, yet it *comes not out of the dust.* Job v. 6, 7. It is no less true, and in itself no less clear, that all the good we enjoy, and all the evil we suffer, come from the same Hand; but we are naturally more sensible of evil than of good, and therefore do more readily reflect upon the original and causes of it. Our distresses lead us to the notice of the righteous God inflicting them, and of our own unrighteous ways procuring them, and provoking Him so to do; and therefore *it is meet* to speak in this submissive, humble language to Him. It is by all means necessary to *speak* to Him. He is the party we have to deal withal, or to speak to, even in those afflictions whereof men are the intervenient visible causes. They are, indeed, but instrumental causes, the *rod and staff* in His hand who smites us; therefore, our business is with *Him*, in whose Supreme Hand alone the mitigations and increases, the continuance and the ending, of our troubles lie. *Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, against whom we have sinned?* Isa. xlii. 24. So Lam. i. 14, *The yoke of my transgressions is bound on by His hand.* Therefore, it is altogether necessary in all afflictions to *speak to Him.* And as it is necessary to speak to Him, so *it is meet* to speak *thus* to Him *I have borne chastisement, I*

understanding, and to correct the will, is a very different undertaking; and not less difficult when it comes to our own case, than it was in the case of those for whom we have been so coolly and dogmatically prescribing. It is not till we practically find how slowly our own arguments produce any effect on ourselves that we cease to marvel at their inefficacy on others. The sick physician tastes with disgust the bitterness of the draught, to the swallowing of which he wondered the patient had felt so much repugnance; and the reader is sometimes convinced by the arguments which fail of their effect on the writer, when he is called, not to discuss, but to act, not to reason, but to suffer. The theory is so just, and the duty so obvious, that even bad men assent to it; the exercise so trying that the best men find it more easy to commend the rule than adopt it. But he who has once gotten engraved, not in his memory but in his heart, this divine precept, THY WILL BE DONE, has made a proficiency which will render all subsequent instruction comparatively easy.

Though sacrifices and oblations were offered to God under the law by his own express appointment, yet he peremptorily rejected them by his prophets, when presented as substitutes instead of signs. Will he, under a more perfect dispensation, accept of any observances which are meant to supersede internal dedication—of any offerings unaccompanied by complete desire of acquiescence in his will? 'My son, give me thine heart,' is his brief but imperative command. But before we can be brought to comply with the spirit of this requisition, God must enlighten our understanding that our devotion may be rational, he must rectify our will, that it may be voluntary, he must purify our heart, that it may be spiritual.

Submission is a duty of such high and holy import, that it can only be learned of the Great Teacher. If it could have been acquired by mere moral institution, the wise sayings of the ancient philosophers would have taught it. But their most elevated standard was low: their strongest motives were the brevity of life, the instability of fortune, the dignity of suffering virtue, things within their narrow sphere of judging; things true indeed as far as they go, but a substratum by no means equal to the superstructure to be built on it. It wanted depth, and strength, and solidity, for the purposes of support. It wanted the only true basis, the assurance that God orders all things according to the purposes of his will for our final good; it wanted that only sure ground of faith by which the genuine Christian cheerfully submits in entire dependence on the promises of the gospel.

Nor let us fancy that we are to be languid and inactive recipients of the divine dispensations. Our own souls must be enlarged, our own views must be ennobled, our own spirit must be dilated. An inoperative acquiescence is not all that is required of us; and if we must not slacken our zeal in doing good, so we must not be remiss in opposing evil, on the flimsy ground that God has permitted evil to infest the world. If it be his will to permit sin, it is an opposition to his will when we do not labour to counteract it. This surrender, therefore, of our will to that of God, takes in a large sweep of actual duties, as well as the whole compass of passive obedience. It involves doing as well as suffering, activity as well as acquiescence, zeal as well as forbearance. Yet the concise petition daily slips off the tongue without our reflecting on the weight of the obligation we are imposing on our-

selves. We do not consider the extent and consequences of the prayer we are offering, the sacrifices, the trials, the privations it may involve, and the large indefinite obedience to all the known and unknown purposes of infinite wisdom to which we are pledging ourselves.

There is no case in which we more shelter ourselves in generalities. Verbal sacrifices cost little, cost nothing. The familiar habit of repeating the petition almost tempts us to fancy that the duty is as easy as the request is short. We are ready to think that a prayer rounded off in four monosyllables can scarcely involve duties coextensive with our whole course of being; that, in uttering them, we renounce all right in ourselves, that we acknowledge the universal indefeasible title of *the blessed and only potentate;* that we make over to him the right to do in us, and with us, and by us, whatever he sees good for ourselves, whatever will promote his glory, though by means sometimes as incomprehensible to our understanding, as unacceptable to our will, because we neither know the motive, nor perceive the end. These simple words express an act of faith the most sublime, an act of allegiance the most unqualified; and, while they make a declaration of entire submission to a Sovereign the most absolute, they are, at the same time, a recognition of love to a Father the most beneficent.

We must remember, that in offering this prayer, we may, by our own request, be offering to resign what we most dread to lose, to give up what is dear to us as our own soul; we may be calling on our heavenly Father to withhold what we are most anxiously labouring to attain, and to withdraw what we are most sedulously endeavouring to keep.

We are solemnly renouncing our property in ourselves, we are distinctly making ourselves over again to Him whose we already are. We specifically entreat him to do with us what he pleases, to mould us to a conformity to his image, without which we shall never be resigned to his will. In short, to dispose of us as his infinite wisdom sees best, however contrary to the scheme which our blindness has laid down as the path to unquestionable happiness.

To render this trying petition easy to us, is one great reason why God, by such a variety of providences, afflicts and brings us low. He knows that we want incentives to humility, even more than incitements to virtuous actions. He shows us in many ways, that self-sufficiency and happiness are incompatible, that pride and peace are irreconcilable; that, following our own way, and doing our own will, which we consider to be of the very essence of felicity, is in direct opposition to it.

'Christianity,' says Bishop Horsely, 'involves many paradoxes, but no contradictions.' To be able to say with entire surrender of the heart, 'Thy will be done,' is the true liberty of the children of God, that liberty with which Christ has made them free. It is a liberty, not which delivers us from restraint, but which, freeing us from our subjection to the senses, makes us find no pleasure but in order, no safety but in the obedience of an intelligent being to his rightful Lord. In delivering us from the heavy bondage of sin, it transfers us to the 'easy yoke of Christ,' from the galling slavery of the world, to the 'light burden' of him who overcame it.

This liberty, in giving a true direction to the affections, gives them amplitude as well as eleva-

tion. The more unconstrained the will becomes, the more it fixes on the object; once fixed on the highest, it does not use its liberty for versatility, but for constancy, not for change, but for fidelity, not for wavering, but adherence.

It is, therefore, no less our interest than our duty to keep the mind in an habitual posture of submission. 'Adam,' says Dr. Hammond, 'after his expulsion, was a greater slave in the wilderness than he had been in the inclosure.' If the barbarian ambassador came express to the Romans to negotiate from his country for permission to be their servants, declaring, that a voluntary submission even to a foreign power, was preferable to a wild and disorderly freedom, well may the Christian triumph in the peace and security to be attained by a complete subjugation to Him who is emphatically called *the God of order*.

A vital faith manifests itself in vital acts. 'Thy will be done,' is eminently a practical petition. The first indication of the gaoler's change of heart was a practical indication. He did not ask, 'Are there few that be saved?' but 'What shall *I* do to be saved?' The first symptom St. Paul gave of his conversion was a practical symptom: 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' He entered on his new course with a total renunciation of his own will. It seemed to this great Apostle, to be the turning point between infidelity and piety, whether he should follow his own will or the will of God. He did not amuse his curiosity with speculative questions. His own immediate and grand concern engrossed his whole soul. Nor was his question a mere hasty effusion, an interrogative springing out of that mixed feeling of awe and wonder which accompanied his first overwhelming convictions.

It became the abiding principle which governed his future life, which made him in labours more abundant. Every successive act of duty, every future sacrifice of ease, sprung from it, was influenced by it. His own will, his ardent, impetuous, fiery will, was not merely subdued, it was extinguished. His powerful mind indeed lost none of its energy, but his proud heart relinquished all its independence.

We allow and adopt the term *devotion* as an indispensable part of religion, because it is supposed to be limited to the act; but *devotedness*, from which it is derived, does not meet with such ready acceptation, because this is a habit, and a habit involves more than an act; it pledges us to consistency, it implies fixedness of character, a general confirmed state of mind, a giving up what we are, and have, and do, to God. Devotedness does not consist in the length of our prayers, nor in the number of our good works, for, though these are the surest evidences of piety, they are not its essence. Devotedness consists in doing and suffering, bearing and forbearing, in the way which God prescribes. The most inconsiderable duty performed with alacrity, if it oppose our own inclination; the most ordinary trial met with a right spirit, is more acceptable to him than a greater effort of our own devising. We do not commend a servant for his activity, if ever so fervently exercised in doing whatever gratifies his own fancy; we do not consider his performance as obedience, unless his activity has been exercised in doing what we required of him. Now, how can we insist on his doing what contradicts his own humour, while we allow ourselves to feel repugnance in serving our

heavenly Master, when his commands do not exactly fall in with our own inclination?

We must also give God leave, not only to take his own way, but his own time. The appointment of seasons, as well as of events, is his. 'He waits to be gracious.' If he delays, it is because we are not yet brought to that state which fits us for the grant of our request. It is not he who must be brought about, but we ourselves. Or perhaps he refuses the thing we ask, in order to give us a better. We implore success in an undertaking, instead of which he gives us content under the disappointment. We ask for the removal of pain; he gives us patience under it. We desire deliverance from our enemies; he sees that we have not yet turned their enmity to our improvement, and he will bring us to a better temper by further exercise. We desire him to avert some impending trial: instead of averting it, he takes away its bitterness; he mitigates what we believed would be intolerable, by giving us a right temper under it. How, then, can we say he has failed of his promise, if he gives something more truly valuable than we had requested at his hands?

Some virtues are more called out in one condition of life, and some in another. The exercise of certain qualities has its time and place; but an endeavour after conformity to the image of God, which is best attained by submission to his will, is of perpetual obligation. If he does not require all virtues under all circumstances, there is no state or condition in which he does not require that to which our church perpetually calls us, 'an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart.' We may have no time, no capacity, no special call for deeds of notorious usefulness; but whatever be our pur-

suits, engagements, or abilities, it will intrench on no time, require no specific call, interfere with no duty, to subdue our perverse will. Though the most severe of all duties, it infringes on no other, but will be the more effectually fulfilled by the very difficulties attending on other pursuits and engagements.

We are so fond of having our own will, that it is astonishing we do not oftener employ it for our own good; for our inward peace is augmented in exact proportion as our repugnance to the Divine will diminishes. Were the conquest over the one complete, the enjoyment of the other would be perfect. But the Holy Spirit does not assume his emphatical title, the COMFORTER, till his previous offices have operated on the heart, till he has 'reproved us of sin, of righteousness, of judgment.'

God makes use of methods inconceivable to us, to bring us to the submission which we are more ready to request with our lips, than to desire with our hearts. By an imperceptible operation he is ever at work for our good; he promotes it by objects the most unlikely. He employs means to our shallow views the most improbable, to effect his own gracious purposes. In every thing he evinces that his thoughts are not as our thoughts. He overrules the opposition of our enemies, the defection of our friends, the faults of our children —the loss of our fortune as well as the disappointments attending its possession—the unsatisfactoriness of pleasures as well as the privation—the contradiction of our desires—the failure of the plans which we thought we had concerted, not only with good judgment, but pure intentions. He makes us sensible of our faults by the mischiefs they bring upon us; and acknowledges our blind-

ness by extracting from it consequences diametrically opposite to those which our actions were intended to produce.

Our love to God is stamped with the same imperfection with all our other graces. If we love him at all, it is as it were traditionally, hereditarily, professionally; it is a love of form, and not of feeling, of education, and not of sentiment, of sense, and not of faith. It is at best a submission to authority, and not an effusion of voluntary gratitude, a conviction of the understanding, and not a cordiality of the affections. We rather assume we have this grace than actually possess it, we rather take it for granted on unexamined grounds, than cherish it as a principle from which whatever good we have must proceed, and from which, if it does not proceed, the principle does not exist.

Surely, says the oppugners of divine Providence, in considering the calamities inflicted on good men, if God loved virtue, he would not oppress the virtuous. Surely Omnipotence may find a way to make his children good, without making them miserable. But have these casuists ever devised a means by which men may be made good without being made humble, or happy, without being made holy, or holy, without trials? Unapt scholars indeed we are in learning the lessons taught! But the teacher is not the less perfect because of the imbecility of his children.

If it be the design of Infinite Goodness to disengage us from the world, to detach us from ourselves, and to purify us to himself, the purification by sufferings seems the most obvious method. The same effect could not be any otherwise produced, except by miracles, and God is an economist of his means in grace as well as in nature. He deals

out all gifts by measure. His operation in both is progressive. Successive events operate in one case, as time and age in the other. As suns and showers so gradually mature the fruits of the earth, that the growth is rather perpetual than perceptible, so God commonly carries on the work of renovation in the heart silently and slowly, by means suitable and simple, though to us imperceptible, and sometimes unintelligible. Were the plans more obvious, and the process ostensible, there would be no room left for the operations of faith, no call for the exercise of patience, no demand for the grace of humility. The road to perfection is tedious and suffering, steep and rugged; our impatience would leap over all the intervening space which keeps us from it, rather than climb it by slow and painful steps. We would fain be spared the sorrow and shame of our own errors, of all their vexatious obstructions, all their dishonourable impediments. We would be completely good and happy at once, without passing through the stages and gradations which lead to goodness and happiness. We require an instantaneous transformation which costs us nothing; the Spirit of God works by a gradual process which costs us much. We would combine his favour with our self-indulgence; we would be spared the trials he has appointed, without losing the felicity he has promised. We complain of the severity of the operation, but the operation would not be so severe, if the disease did not lie so deep.

Besides, the afflictions which God appoints are not seldom sent to save us from those we should bring on ourselves, and which might have added guilt to misery.—He threatens, but it is that he may finally save. If 'punishment is his strange,' it is also his necessary 'works.' Even in the

sorest affliction, the loss of those we love, there may be a mercy impenetrable to us.—God has, perhaps, laid up for us in heaven that friend whom we might have lost in eternity, had he been restored to our prayers here. But if the affliction be not improved, it is, indeed, unspeakably heavy. If the loss of our friend does not help to detach us from the world, we have the calamity without the indemnification; we are deprived of our treasure without any advantage to ourselves. If the loss of him we loved does not make us more earnest to secure our salvation, we may lose at once our friend and our soul.—To endure the penalty and lose the profit, is to be emphatically miserable.

Sufferings are the only relics of the true cross, and when Divine grace turns them to our spiritual good, they almost perform the miracles which blind superstition ascribes to the false one. God mercifully takes from us what we have not courage to offer him; but if, when he resumes it, he sanctifies the loss, let us not repine. It was his, while it was ours. He was the proprietor, while we were the possessors.

Though we profess a general readiness to submit to the Divine will, there is nothing in which we are more liable to illusion. Self-love is a subtle casuist. We invent distinctions. We too critically discriminate between afflictions which proceed more immediately from God, and disappointments which come from the world. To the former we acknowledge, in words at least, our willingness to submit. In the latter, though equally his dispensation, we seem to feel justified in refusing to acquiesce. God does not desire us to inflict punishments on ourselves, he only expects us to bear with patience those he inflicts on us, whether they

come more immediately from himself, or through the medium of his creatures.

Love being the root of obedience, it is no test of that obedience, if we obey God only in things which do not cross our inclinations, while we disobey him in things that are repugnant to them. Not to obey except when it costs us nothing, is rather to please ourselves than God, for it is evident we should disobey him in these also, if the allurement were equally powerful in these cases as in the others. We may, indeed, plead an apology that the command we resist is of less importance than that with which we comply; but this is a false excuse, for the authority which enjoins the least, is the same with that which commands the greatest; and it is the authority by which we are to submit, as much as to the command.

There is a passage in St. Luke which does not seem to be always brought to bear on this point as fully as it ought: 'unless a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' This does not seem to be quite identical with the command in another place, that a man should 'sell all that he has,' &c. When the Christian world indeed was in its infancy, the literal requisition in both cases was absolutely necessary. But it appears to be a more liberal interpretation of the command, as 'forsaking' all that we have, extends to a full and entire consecration of ourselves to God, a dedication without reserve, not of fortune only, but of every desire, every faculty, every inclination, every talent; a resignation of the whole will, a surrender of the whole soul. It is this surrender which alone sanctifies our best actions. It is this pure oblation, this offering of unshared affection, this unmaimed sacrifice, which is alone acceptable to God,

through *that full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction*, made for the sins of the whole world. Our money he will not accept without our good will, our devotions without our affections, our services without our hearts. Like the prevaricating pair, whose duplicity was punished by instant death, whatever we keep back will annihilate the value of what we bring. It will be nothing if it be not all.

H. More.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF PRAYER.

Many Christians have been enabled to convert their trials into blessings, by gradually bringing themselves to devote the hours of wakeful and even painful nights to devout meditation and prayer. By doing at first some violence to their inclinations, they have afterwards found in it both profit and pleasure. The night has been made to them a season of heart-searching thought and spiritual consolation. Solitude and stillness completely shut out the world; its business, its cares, its impertinences. The mind is sobered, the passions are stilled, it seems to the watchful Christian as if there were in the universe only God and his own soul. It is an inexpressible consolation to him to feel that the one Being in the universe, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth, is the very Being to whom he has free access, even in the most unseasonable hours. The faculties of the mind may not, perhaps, be in their highest exercise, but the affections of the heart, from the exclusion of distracting objects, more readily ascend to their noblest object. Night and darkness are no parasites: conscience is more

easily alarmed. It puts on fewer disguises. We appear to ourselves more what we really are. This detection is salutary. The glare which the cheerful daylight, business, pleasure, and company, had shed over all objects, is withdrawn. Schemes, which, in the day, had appeared plausible, now present objections. What had then appeared safe, now, at least, seems to require deliberation. This silent season of self-examination is a keen detector of any latent evil, which, like the fly in the box of perfume, may corrupt much that is pure.

When this communion with God can be maintained, it supplies deficiencies of devotion to those who have little leisure during the day; and, by thus rescuing these otherwise lost hours, it snatches time from oblivion, at once adds to the length of life, and weans from the love of it.

If the wearied and restless body be tempted to exclaim 'would God it were morning,' the very term suggests the most consoling of all images. The quick mind shoots forward beyond this vale of tears, beyond the dark valley of the shadow of death; it stretches onward to the joyful morning of the Resurrection; it anticipates that blessed state where there is no more weeping and no more night—no weeping, for God's own hand shall wipe away the tears; no night, for the Lamb himself shall be the light.

If disqualifying pain, or distressing languor, prevent the utterance of supplication, patience is itself a prayer, and a prayer which will not fail to be heard. We have a striking instance of an answer to silent prayer, in the case of Moses. In a situation of extreme distress, when he had not uttered a word, 'the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy crying.'

The tender mercy of our compassionate Father will make sense, and find meaning in a prayer which is almost unintelligible to the languid sufferer who offers it. God wants not to be informed, he wants only to be remembered, to be loved, to be sought.

If there is any day in which we are quite certain that we shall meet with no trial from Providence, no temptation from the world, any day in which we shall be sure to have no wrong tempers excited in ourselves, no call to bear with those of others, no misfortune to encounter, and no need of Divine assistance to endure it, on that morning we may safely omit our prayer.

If there is any evening in which we have received no protection from God, and experienced no mercy at his hands; if we have not lost a single opportunity of doing or receiving good, if we are quite certain, that we have not once spoken unadvisedly with our lips, nor entertained one vain or idle thought in our heart, on that night we may safely omit praise to God, and the confession of our own sinfulness; on that night we may safely omit humiliation and thanksgiving. To repeat the converse would be superfluous.

When we can conscientiously say, that religion has given a tone to our conduct, a law to our actions, a rule to our thoughts, a bridle to our tongue, a restraint to every wrong passion, a check to every evil temper, then, some will say, we may safely be dismissed from the drudgery of prayer; it will then have answered all the end which you so tiresomely recommend. So far from it, we really figure to ourselves, that if we could hope to hear of a being brought to such perfection of discipline, it would unquestionably be found that this would

be the very being who would continue most perseveringly in the practice of that devotion, which had so materially contributed to bring his heart and mind into so desirable a state, who would most tremble to discontinue prayer, who would be most appalled at the thought of the condition into which such discontinuance would be likely to reduce him. Whatever others do, he will continue for ever to 'sing praises unto Thee, O Thou most Highest; he will continue to tell of thy loving kindness early in the morning, and of thy truth in the night season.'

It is true that while he considered religion as something nominal and ceremonial, rather than as a principle of spirit and of life, he felt nothing encouraging, nothing refreshing, nothing delightful in prayer. But since he began to feel it as the means of procuring the most substantial blessings to his heart; since he began to experience something of the realization of the promises to his soul, in the performance of this exercise, he finds there is no employment so satisfactory, none that his mind can so little do without; none that so effectually raises him above the world, none that so opens his eyes to its empty shadows, none which can make him look with so much indifference on its lying vanities; none that can so powerfully defend him against the assaults of temptation, and the allurements of pleasure, none that can so sustain him under labour, so carry him through difficulties; none that can so quicken him in the practice of every virtue, and animate him in the discharge of every duty.

But if prayer be so exhilirating to the soul, what shall be said of praise? Praise is the only employment, we had almost said, it is the only duty, in

which self finds no part. In praise we go out of ourselves, and think only of Him to whom we offer it. It is the most purely disinterested of all services. It is gratitude without solicitation, acknowledgement without petition. Prayer is the overflowing expression of our wants, praise of our affections. Prayer is the language of the destitute, praise of the redeemed sinner. If the angelic spirits offer their praises exempt from our mixture of infirmity or alloy, yet we have a motive for gratitude, unknown even to the angels. They are unfallen beings; they cannot say as we can, 'Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us.'—Prayer is prospective. Praise takes in, in its wide range, enjoyment of present, remembrance of past, and anticipation of future blessings. Prayer points the only way to heaven, 'praise is already there.'

H. More.

MEEKNESS UNDER CORRECTION.

Thus, likewise, in private personal correctings, let us learn to behave ourselves meekly and humbly, as the children of so great and good a Father; whatsoever He inflicts, not to murmur, nor entertain a fretful thought of it. Besides the undutifulness, and unseemliness of it, how vain is it! What gain we by struggling and casting up our hand to cast off the rod, but the more lashes? Our only way is, to kneel and fold under His hands, and kiss His rod, and even while He is smiting us, to be blessing Him, sending up confessions of His righteousness, and goodness, and faithfulness, only entreating for the turning away of his wrath, though it should be with the continuing of our

affliction. That is here the style of the Prophet's prayer, *Correct me, O Lord, but not in anger.* And according to this suit, even where troubles are chastisements for sin, yet a child of God may find much sweetness, reading much of God's love in so dealing with him, in not suffering him to grow wanton and forget Him, as, in much ease, even His own children sometimes do. And as they may find much of God's love to them in sharp corrections, they may raise and act much of their love to Him in often-repeated resignments and submissions of themselves, and ready consenting to, yea, rejoicing in His good pleasure, even in those things which to their flesh and sense are most unpleasant.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

REMINISCENCE.

"REMEMBRANCE of the dead revives
The slain of time, at will,
Those who were lovely in their lives,
In death are lovelier still.

"Unburthen'd with infirmity,
Unplagued like mortal men,
Oh! with what pure delight we see
The heart's old friends again!

"Not as they sunk into the tomb,
With sickness-wasted powers,
But in the beauty and the bloom
Of their best days, and ours.

"The troubles of departed years
Bring joys unknown before;
And soul-refreshing are the tears
O'er wounds that bleed no more.

"Lightning may blast, but thunder-showers
Earth's ravaged face renew,
With nectar fill the cups of flowers,
And hang the thorns with dew.

"Remembrance of the dead is sweet;
Yet how imperfect this,
Unless past, present, future meet,
A threefold cord of bliss!

"Companions of our youth, our age,
With whom through life we walked,
And, in our house of pilgrimage,
Of home beyond it talked.

"Grief on their urn may fix her eyes,
They spring not from the ground;
Love may invoke them from the skies,
There is no voice nor sound.

"Fond memory marks them as they were,
Stars in our horoscope;
But soon to see them as they are,
That is our dearest hope.

"Not through the darkness of the night,
To waking thoughts conceal'd,
But in the uncreated light
Of Deity reveal'd.

They cannot come to us, but we
Ere long to them may go;
That glimpse of immortality
Is heaven begun below."

THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

THOUGHTS of Heaven! they come when low
The summer-eve's breeze doth faintly blow:
When the mighty sea shines clear, unstirred
By the wavering tide, or the dipping bird:
They come in the rush of the surging storm,
When the blackening waves rear their giant form,
When o'er the dark rocks curl the breakers white,
And the terrible lightnings rend the night—
When the noble ship hath vainly striven
With the tempest's might, come thoughts of Heaven.

They come where man doth not intrude,
In the untracked forest's solitude;
In the stillness of the gray rocks' height,
Whence the lonely eagle takes his flight;
On peaks, where lie the eternal snows;
In the sun-bright isle, mid its rich repose;
In the healthy glen, by the dark, clear lake,
Where the fair swan sails from her silent brake;
Where nature reigns in her deepest rest,
Pure thoughts of Heaven come unrepress'd.

They come as we gaze on the midnight sky,
When the star-gemmed vault looks dark and high,
And the soul, on the wings of thought sublime,
Soars from the dim world and the bounds of time;
Till the mental eye becomes unsealed,
And the mystery of being in light revealed;
They rise in the Gothic chapel dim,
When slowly bursts forth the holy hymn,
And the organ's rich tones swell full and high,
Till the roof peals back the melody.

Thoughts of Heaven! from his joy beguiled,
They come to the bright-eyed, artless child;
To the man of age in his dim decay,
Bringing hope his youth has not borne away;
To the woe-smit soul in its dark distress,
As flowers spring up in the wilderness;
And in silent chambers of the dead,
Where the mourner goes with soundless tread;
For as the day-beams freely fall,
Pure thoughts of Heaven are sent to all.

MARY HOWITT.

THE REFUGE.

"Take up thy Cross and follow me."

TURN from this world;—'t is not thy home!
From wave to wave why wilt thou roam—
Like yon small lovely speck of foam
On ocean's ever-heaving breast?
If toss'd by every storm that blows,
Brighten'd by every gleam that glows,
And melted by each tear that flows,
Canst thou find rest?

Could wealth to thee true joy impart?
Can giddy pleasure charm thy heart?
Or splendour soothe its secret smart—
Or heal its pain?
Could taste—could feelings most refined—
Can all the stores of art combined—
E'en 'midst the favour'd sons of mind
Thou 'st sought in vain?

Is there no shelter to be found,
When clouds and darkness gather round,
And e'en the deep fix'd solid ground
  Is earthquake riven?
Is there no sure, no certain stay,
No lamp to guide the wanderer's way,
And pour around its cheering ray,
  In mercy given.

Turn to the world that may be thine,
Where love and peace for ever join!
Look up!—behold that mystic sign—
  Make it thine own!
Then shall the storms that rend thy breast
Be hush'd to everlasting rest,
And thou received a welcome guest
  Beneath His throne!

ROLLS.

COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN A BETTER WORLD.

As we have been together in the labour, duty, danger, and distress, so shall we be in the great recompense and deliverance. As we have been scorned and despised, so shall we be owned and honoured together. We who have gone through the day of sadness, shall enjoy together that day of gladness and triumph.

Those who have been with us in persecution and in prison, shall be with us also in the palace of consolation. How oft have our groans made, as it were, one sound; our tears, one stream; and our desires, one prayer! But now all our praises shall

make up one melody, all our churches one church, and all ourselves one body; for we shall be one in Christ, even as he and the Father are one.

BAXTER.

THE BLISS OF HEAVEN.

REDEEMED spirits abide at the source of all felicity, and enjoy inconceivable pleasures. They are completely released from all sins and sufferings, from all temptations and sorrows. Moral evil, with all its attendants, is eternally banished from those bright abodes; for the people who dwell there are all perfectly righteous; nor shall any of the inhabitants of that land say, "I am sick." Their garments are always white; their harps are always tuned. Being with Christ, according to his promise, they behold his glory, and are delighted with his beauty.

Now the immortal spirit is invigorated in all its powers, enlarged in all its faculties, on purpose to render it capable of taking in more copious views, and of receiving abundantly larger emanations of divine love, than it could possibly before enjoy. They have now traced up the streams to the eternal fountain; the beams to the very sun of love. With adoring hearts and ravished eyes, with animated devotion, and notes divinely sweet, they join the heavenly choir in that seraphic hymn, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of his glory! How inconceivable the pleasure! How divine the joy!

And all their sublime felicity is permanent. The infinite God is their portion, and their "exceeding

great reward." Their happiness, therefore, is durable as the divine perfections they adore and enjoy. The limits of their capacities will be for ever enlarging, and for ever receiving greater measures of glory. For the Deity is an infinite source of blessedness; and finite vessels may be for ever expanding, and for ever filling, in that ocean of all-sufficiency.

BOOTH.

THE LAND OF THE BLEST.

O, WHEN the hours of life are past,
And death's dark shade arrives at last,
It is not sleep, it is not rest;
'T is glory opening to the blest.

Their way to heaven was pure from sin,
And Christ shall there receive them in:
There, each shall wear a robe of light,
Like his, divinely fair and bright.

There, parted hearts again shall meet,
In union holy, calm, and sweet,
There, grief find rest; and never more
Shall sorrow call them to deplore.

There, angels will unite their prayers
With spirits bright and blest as theirs;
And light shall glance on every crown,
From suns that never more go down.

No storms shall ride the troubled air;
No voice of passion enter there;
But all be peaceful as the sigh
Of evening gales, that breathe, and die.

For there the God of mercy sheds
His purest influence on their heads,
And gilds the spirits round the throne
With glory radiant as his own.

W. O. B. PEABODY.

BENEFIT OF AFFLICTION.

AFFLICTIONS are God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our heavenly rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and on the left, we should scarcely keep in the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it! When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness, or other affliction, reduce us! Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters, and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!" Not only the green pastures and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the Word and Spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the Word hath easier entrance.

BAXTER.

THE PILGRIM ENTERING INTO REST.

"THOU shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of thy days." Christian Pilgrim! You shall soon

reach the city of habitation; and then the wanderings of the wilderness, its solitude, its tempests, its privations, shall be forgotten; or, if they are remembered, remembered to make the communion of the heavenly Jerusalem, its perpetual sunshine, its fullness of joy, the more enrapturing. When Joseph's two sons were presented to his father, the old man said, "I had not thought to see thy face, and lo! God hath showed me thy seed." Similar to his, will be the feelings of good men in heaven. I often thought it very doubtful if ever I should arrive at paradise; but thou hast brought me to glory, and a happiness which it never entered into my heart to conceive. I thought I should be blessed indeed, if but admitted within its gates, and in the portion adjudged to one who was less than the least of all saints; but thou hast set me among the princes of the people, and from the threshold where I wished to kneel, thou hast called me to thy throne.

BELFRAGE.

OBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN HOPE.

THE perfect and everlasting happiness of heaven, is an object of a righteous man's hope in death. He hopes to drop all his sins, and their attendant train of sorrows, behind him; and to be perfectly holy, and consequently happy, for ever. He hopes to see his God and Saviour, and to spend a happy eternity in society with him, and in his service. He hopes to join the company of angels, and of his fellow-saints of the human race. He hopes to improve in knowledge, in holiness, and in capacities for action and enjoyment, in an endless

gradation. He hopes to see "the face of God in righteousness, and to be satisfied, when he awakes in his likeness." In short, he hopes to be unspeakably happy through an endless duration.

What a glorious hope is this! This has made many a soul welcome death with open arms. This has made them "desirous of being with Christ, which is far better." And this has sweetly swallowed up the sensations of bodily pain. Indeed, without this, immortality would be an object of terror, and not of hope; the prospect would be insupportably dreadful. For who can bear the thought of an immortal duration spent in an eternal banishment from God, and all happiness, and in the sufferance of the most exquisite pain! But a happy immortality, what can charm us more.

DAVIES.

A PIOUS YOUTH CLOSING LIFE.

A SERVANT, who had lived fifteen years in the family, a pious man, occasionally slept in his chamber. In religious conversation with this humble Christian, he often beguiled a part of the night; and, about the middle of the night, he usually requested him to pray. He now appeared to possess great consolation, from experiencing the faithfulness of God. His hope and trust in the great sacrifice of the Christian covenant, and the consequent peace and serenity of his mind, seemed daily to increase. He said, "I am surrounded with nothing but mercies; but the greatest of all mercies is Jesus Christ. I want no other refuge; none besides will suit me." A friend asking if he had any doubts of the divinity of the Saviour? he

replied. "No, Sir; I must have a whole Saviour; a half Saviour won't do for me." "One night I felt such a sweet calm resignation to the will of God, that I could have left all immediately; not absolutely a longing to be gone, but entire resignation to the whole will of God." In this delightful frame of mind he continued till he expired.

O ye, who have partaken with him in the studies and amusements of younger life, come hither, and contemplate his last hour! Do you not envy such a death as this? Do ye not remember enough of his character, to know that insincerity was never among his faults? That his feelings and consolations must have been real? Do you not perceive, that his example calls on you, to pay an early and an immediate attention to the state of your souls towards God? Was he not as healthy, was he not as active, was he not as lively, as any of you? And yet did he continue to presume on length of days? Did he not early turn to God? Had he not also good sense and talents, beyond the greater number of you? And did he deem it weak, or vain, or foolish, to give up his heart to God, to search the Scriptures with earnest diligence, to devote his morning and evening leisure to the duties of secret religion? Did he dare to presume on early religious advantages? Did he fancy, that correct religious notions, without religious feeling, or Christian practice, would save his soul? Did he not bow down in penitent self-abasement before God? Did he not lift up his head in humble hope through Jesus alone? Did not the power of godliness produce in him beneficial, impressive, and abiding results, to the praise of the glory of divine mercy? Are you hesitating and halting before you can make up your minds? O hear his dying

testimony,—"What a mercy is it, that I have not now a Saviour to seek!"

BULLAR'S MEM. OF P. WHITTY.

RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

GOD wills two things,—that we should be virtuous and that we should be happy; the first in order to the second. We should consider whose will it is that requireth our compliance.

It is the will of Him, who founded the earth, and reared the heaven, whose will sustaineth all things in their existence and operation.

It is the will of our Maker, who did create and confer on us the very power of willing; and shall we turn the work of his hands, the gift of his bounty, against him?

It is the will of our Preserver, who, together with all that we are, or have, continually doth uphold our very will itself; so that, without employing any positive force, merely by letting us fall out of his hand, he can send us and it back to nothing.

It is the will of our sovereign Lord, who, upon various indisputable accounts, hath a just right to govern us, and an absolute power to dispose of us; ought we not, therefore, to say with Eli, "It is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good!"

It is the will of our Judge, from whose mouth our doom must proceed, awarding life or death.

It is the will of our Redeemer, who has bought us with an inestimable price, and has, with infinite pains, rescued us from miserable captivity, that we might enjoy perfect freedom.

It is the will of our best Friend, who loveth us much better than we love ourselves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own dearest interest, and greatly delighted therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonstrated an excess of kindness to us; who, in all his dealings with us, doth aim purely at our good; who never doth afflict or grieve us more against our will, than against his own desire; never, indeed, but when goodness itself calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto.

It is the will of him, who is most holy, whose will is essential rectitude; who is infinitely wise; who, therefore, doth infallibly know what is best for us. It is his will, who is uncontrollably powerful, and who must prevail.

BARROW.

ON RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF PROVIDENCE.

IT is too common for persons who are perfectly convinced of the duty of patience and cheerful resignation under great and severe trials, in which the hand of Providence is plainly seen, to let themselves grow fretful and plaintive under little vexations and slight disappointments, as if their submission in one case gave them a right to rebel in another; as if there was something meritorious in the greater sufferings, that gave them a claim to full indulgence in every trifling wish of their heart; and, accordingly, they will set their hearts most violently upon little reliefs and amusements, and complain and pity themselves grievously if they are at any time denied.

All this is building on a false foundation: the same gracious Providence, that sends real afflictions only for our good, will, we may be absolutely sure, afford us such supports and reliefs under them as are needful and fit; but it will not accommodate itself to our idle humour.

To be happy, we must depend for our happiness on him alone who is able to give it: we must not lean on human props of any kind; though when granted us, we may thankfully accept and make use of them; but always with caution, not to lay so much weight upon them, as that the reed, broken under our hand, may go into it and pierce it.

On the loss of a friend, we must not say, This and that person, this and that amusement shall be my relief and support; but—To Providence I must submit—Providence will support me in what way it sees proper.—The means on which I must depend, under that, are a careful and cheerful performance of, and an acquiescence in whatever is my duty: I must accommodate myself to all its appointments; and be they health or langour; a dull or an active and gay life; a society agreeable to my fancy, or one that is not, or none at all—if I do but endeavour to keep up this right disposition, and behave accordingly, nothing ought to make me melancholy or unhappy, nothing can, nothing shall. Forward beyond this life, in this case, I not only may, but ought to look with joy and hope, with cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit: forward in this life, it is not only painful, but faulty, to look either with anxiety, or with self-flattering schemes. Yet on this present scene, from day to day, and forward, so far as is necessary to the duty of prudence, I may look with a

smile of content and gratitude; for every day has something, has innumerable things, good and cheerful in it, if I know but how to make the best of it.

In a change of situation, think not, like a child, of the toys you leave, and the toys you shall find to make you amends for them: all playthings are brittle: think not, like a grazing animal, that you have changed one pasture for another; and shall graze on this or that herb here with delight; "The herb withereth, the flower fadeth," everywhere. But think like a reasonable creature.—This change was appointed for me: acquiescence is my duty; duty must be my support. Yet, I know, such is the condescendence of Infinite Goodness, that I shall have many a slighter relief and agreeableness thrown in; but these are, by the by, not to be reckoned on beforehand, nor to be grieved for if they fail or intermit.

MISS TALBOT.

THE DYING CHRISTIAN.

COME, my friends, enter into the chamber of a dying saint, in the lively exercise of divine faith, and with the bright prospect of immortality full in his view; observe the smile that sits upon his countenance; view his patience, his resignation, his peaceful serenity; hear the holy and heavenly language which drops from his lips; "I go the way of all the earth; and I long to be gone, to be where my Saviour is. I have trusted in him for salvation; I have committed my everlasting all into his faithful hands; and I know whom I have believed. O the heavenly peace and joy that I now find in

God's everlasting, sure, and well-ordered covenant. It has been my support through life, under many painful trials, and overwhelming sorrows.

"And now, when drawing near to the eternal world, and about to bid adieu to all things here below, it is the spring of joy unspeakable and full of glory. With my shepherd's rod and staff to support me, I can walk fearless and undismayed, through the valley of the shadow of death. 'For this God is my God, for ever and ever; he will be my guide even unto death.' I have no righteousness of my own to plead at God's tribunal; but I bless God, who hath given me faith to rely on the all-atoning efficacy of my Redeemer's blood, and the infinite merit of his perfect righteousness; so that now, through faith in his name, I can triumph and say, 'O Death; where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law! but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

BLACK.

THE DYING CHRISTIAN'S ANTICIPATION OF DEATH AND GLORY.

My body wastes, my strength decays,
My cheek is sunk and pale;
My feeble, flutt'ring pulse betrays
How fast my spirits fail!
The garden spreads its every charm,
To tempt me forth again;
But friendship's kind encircling arm
Assists my steps in vain.

In vain the sun ascends the sky,
Or darkness veils the lawn;
By day, for evening's close, I sigh—
By night, for morning's dawn;
Each waking act a burden seems
To nature's sinking pow'rs,
And fancy's wild and fever'd dreams
Disturb my sleeping hours.

Come, then, my soul, since human skill
Denies all hope to save;
My thoughts let death and judgment fill,
And realms beyond the grave:
And while my friends, with doubt and fear,
My fading members see,
Let this dear truth thy bosom cheer—
That Jesus died for me.

Jesus, my prophet, priest, and king,
In death's cold arms hath lain;
Jesus, who blunts the monster's sting,
Shall raise my dust again:
'T is sweet to feed upon his grace,
Who reigns on Sion hill;
But O! to see him, face to face,
It must be sweeter still!

My soaring spirit heav'nward tends,
E'en now its porch I view;
Adieu, my dear, desponding friends!
And thou, vain world, adieu!
The faith that Christ is Lord on high,
A blest assurance gives;
Shall ransom'd sinner fear to die,
While his Redeemer lives?

H. E.

DYING EXPRESSIONS OF WILLIAM PENN.

He was the son of the justly celebrated William Penn, and had just completed his twentieth year when he died. The following are some of the sentiments which dropped from his lips in his last illness:—

"I am resigned to what God pleases. He knows what is best. I would live if it pleased him, that I might serve him; but, O Lord, not my will, but thine be done!"

A person speaking to him of the things of the world, and how they would please him, should he recover; he said, "My eyes look another way,—even where the truest pleasure is!"

"The Lord comes in upon my spirit; I have heavenly meetings with him by myself."

"Dear sister," said he, taking her by the hand, "look to the good things; dear sister, there is no comfort without them. One drop of the love of God, is worth more than all the world. I know it. I have tasted it. I have felt more of the love of God in this sickness, than in all my life before."

Two or three days before his departure, he called his brother to him, and looking solemnly on him said, "Be a good boy,—know that there is a God, a great and mighty God, who is a rewarder of the righteous and of the wicked. Avoid idle people, and idle company, and love good company, and good people, and the Lord will bless thee. I have seen good things for thee since my sickness, if thou dost but fear the Lord. And if I should not live, though the Lord is all-sufficient, remember what I say to thee when I am dead and gone. Dear brother! the Lord bless thee!"

Being asked, if he would have his milk, or if he would eat any thing, he replied, "No more outward food, for heavenly food is provided for me!"

"Come life, come death, I am resigned; O, the love of God overcomes my soul."

When his medical friend came to visit him, he said, "Let my father speak to him, and I will go to sleep;" which he did, and waked no more in this world; expiring calmly reposing on the bosom of his father.

THE DEATH-BED COMFORT OF A CHRISTIAN.

Who ever left the precincts of mortality without casting a wistful look on what he left behind, and a trembling eye on the scene that is before him? Being formed by our Creator for enjoyments, even in this life, we are endowed with a sensibility to the objects around us. We have affections, and we delight to indulge them; we have hearts, and we want to bestow them. Bad as the world is, we find in it objects of affection and attachment. Even in this waste and howling wilderness, there are spots of verdure and of beauty, of power to charm the mind, and to make us cry out, "It is good for us to be here." When, after the observation and experience of years, we have found out the objects of the soul, and met with minds congenial to our own, what pangs must it give to the heart to think of parting for ever! We contract an attachment even to inanimate objects. The tree under whose shadow we have often sat; the fields where we have frequently strayed; the hill, the scene of contemplation, or the haunt of friendship, become objects of passion to the mind, and upon our leaving

them excite a temporary sorrow and regret. If these things can affect us with uneasiness, how great must be the affliction when stretched on that bed from which we shall rise no more; and looking about, for the last time, on the sad circle of our weeping friends;—how great must be the affliction to dissolve at once all the attachments of life; to bid an eternal adieu to the friends whom we long have loved, and to part for ever with all that is dear below the sun! But let not the Christian be disconsolate. He parts with the objects of his affection, to meet them again; to meet them in a better world, where change never enters, and from whose blissful mansion sorrow flies away. At the resurrection of the just in the great assembly of the sons of God, when all the family of heaven are gathered together, not one person shall be missing that was worthy of thy affection or esteem. And if among imperfect creatures, and in a troubled world, the kind, the tender, and the generous affections have such power to charm the heart, that even the tears which they occasion delight us, what joy unspeakable and glorious will they produce when they exist in perfect minds, and are improved by the purity of the heavens!

LOGAN.

"I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAY."

EARTH is the spirit's rayless cell;
But then, as a bird soars home to the shade
Of the beautiful wood, where its nest was made,
In bonds no more to dwell;—

So will its weary wing
Be spread for the skies, when its toil is done,
And its breath flow free, as a bird's in the sun,
And the soft, fresh gales of spring.

O, not more sweet the tears
Of the dewy eve on the violet shed,
Than the dews of age on the "hoary head,"
When it enters the eve of years.

Nor dearer, 'mid the foam
Of the far-off sea, and its stormy roar,
Is a breath of balm from the unseen shore,
To him that weeps for home.

Wings, like a dove, to fly!—
The spirit is faint with its feverish strife;—
O, for its home in the upper Life!
When, when will Death draw nigh!

B. B. THATCHER.

DETACHED THOUGHTS.

WE are forbidden to murmur, but we are not forbidden to regret; and whom we loved tenderly while living, we may still pursue with an affectionate remembrance, without having any occasion to charge ourselves with rebellion against the sovereignty that appointed a separation.

COWPER.

How naturally does affliction make us Christians! and how impossible is it when all human help is vain; and the whole earth too poor and trifling to

furnish us with one moment's peace,—how impossible is it then to avoid looking at the Gospel.

Ibid.

We would always withhold from the skies those who alone can reach them; at least till we are ready to bear them company.

Ibid.

THE TEARS OF THE AGED.

"Why should a tear be in an Old Man's eye?
Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
And in the weakness of humanity,
From natural wisdom turn our hearts away,
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears,
And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
The calm of nature with our restless thoughts?"

WORDSWORTH.

MOURNFUL THOUGHTS FRIENDLY TO VIRTUE.

We have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always might be found
A power to virtue friendly.

WORDSWORTH.

GRIEVE NO MORE.

My Friend! enough to sorrow you have given,
The purposes of wisdom ask no more;
Be wise and cheerful; and no longer read
The forms of things with an unworthy eye:
They sleep in the calm earth, and peace is there.

WORDSWORTH.

SERENITY IN SORROW.

He that suffers most, he outwardly,
And inwardly perhaps, the most serene, with most undaunted eye!
Oh! blest are they who live and die like these,
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourned!

WORDSWORTH.

HOPE IN SORROW.

Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

WORDSWORTH.

SOURCES OF COMFORT.

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight;
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which, having been, must ever be,
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering,
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

WORDSWORTH.

SECURE IN HOPE.

Sure, when the separation has been tried,
That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

WORDSWORTH.

THE TRUE CONSOLER.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn and ask
Of Him to be our friend!

WORDSWORTH.

OBEDIENCE CONDUCTS TO PEACE OF MIND.

Time flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And reproduce the trouble he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed.

WORDSWORTH.

HOPE.

The food of hope
Is meditated action; robbed of this
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also; for we live by hope
And by desire; we see by the glad light,
And breathe the sweet air of futurity,
And so we live, or else we have no life.
To-morrow—nay perchance this very hour,
(For every moment hath its own to-morrow.)

WORDSWORTH.

RESIGNATION.

"It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Resignation to the will of God, among the trials and vicissitudes of human life, is a noble attainment in religion. The cultivation of it is a duty; and the possession of it is a source of the purest happiness.

Resignation implies—trial, suffering, sacrifice, something contrary to our will, or painful to our feelings: for it is absurd to speak of resigning, when we enjoy what is pleasing and agreeable.

Resignation may be regarded in two points of view; as surrender, and as submission. In the former view, I resign to the will of God, when I surrender myself to Him. The truly spiritual man desires that the will of God may be done; and this implies either a total renunciation, or an entire subordination, of his own plans, purposes, hopes, and wishes. He sees and feels that he is God's property; and the first wish of his heart is, that the will of God respecting him may be accomplished. He would be at the divine disposal. His place, his employment, his circumstances—as to all these he renounces self-will, and his prayer is, "Thy will be done."

But resignation in the latter view, is submission and patience under sufferings. "Many are the troubles of the righteous." This is a suffering world; and I should form a weak and fanciful notion of religion, if I supposed that it would exempt me from the sorrows that belong to our fallen humanity.

I may be afflicted in mind, in body, in estate—I may be suddenly bereaved of my nearest and dear-

est relatives and friends. Foes may be powerful, or friends may be faithless. I may be separated by mountains and oceans from those whose society I wished to enjoy. I may endeavour in different ways to do some good in the world, and be ready to exclaim at last, judging from appearances, "I have laboured in vain: I have spent my strength for nought."

Here I see the need of resignation. If I yield to my own heart, I shall fret, murmur, repine; not submit, not acquiesce, not resign. It would then be said of me justly—"His heart fretteth against the Lord." I should forget my mercies, magnify my sufferings, and say, "My time, my way, my will;" instead of saying, "The Lord's will, way and time."

But if I have resignation, I shall placidly own the will of God in what I endure, and in the frustration of my schemes, works, and prospects.—"Shall I receive good at the hand of God, and shall I not receive evil?" God is equally wise and gracious; and He knows best what is good for us: persuaded of this, I shall resign to Him, as a dutiful child resigns to the will of his kind parent.

I admire resignation: but do I possess and exercise it? When the stream of things seems to be against me, and I am tried in various ways, though I do not fret and murmur, do not some dark thoughts rise up in my mind, and some improper feelings prevail in my heart? My weakness, folly, unbelief, and ingratitude, are not concealed from Him who searches the heart: He sees how often I am far more like the dissatisfied Jonah than the patient and enduring Job.

O, my Soul! resignation is a duty and a source of happiness. Not to resign, is to be proud and rebellious. As to happiness, Resignation sees the

racters of love on the darkest cloud, finds flowers in the roughest path, and hears whispers of kindness in the most furious storm. O surrender thyself to God, and submit to His will. Cherish the feelings of an affectionate child. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Believe this consolatory assurance. Art thou in darkness? All will soon be light for ever. Dost thou drink the cup of sorrow? Thou wilt soon fill thy cup from the river of life O, then, let thy language always be—the will of God is my will.

O blessed and merciful God, subdue me wholly to Thyself; and in the day of trial and vexation, help me to recognise thy hand and thy will. Deliver me from pride, selfishness, and discontent: and let the first desire of my soul be at all times, to do and to suffer what Thou seest fit to appoint for me. Grant this, I entreat Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

JONES.

CONSOLATION.

GOD is "the God of peace and consolation:" the Lord Jesus is a Comforter; and such, too, emphatically, is the Holy Spirit. The Bible is—the book of consolation: and he who receives its truths has "strong" and "everlasting" consolation. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

I have need of consolation; for this is an evil and suffering world. Sin and sorrow are the birthright of man. But I find in the Bible what I need:

It makes, it is true, awful discoveries; but these are designed to lead me to its gracious discoveries. It tells me of sin, that I may seek salvation; of the divine wrath, that I may seek the divine favour; of the woes of hell, that I may seek the joys of heaven.

I may be troubled and distressed in my temporal affairs; but I look to the providence of God. Jehovah is King, and He orders all things. Whether I have prosperity or adversity, I have what He allots me; what He sees to be good for me. I think of this, and I am comforted.

I meditate on my depravity, my sins, my imperfections, my unprofitableness, and my soul is "cast down and disquieted within me." Where shall I look? "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I look to our Advocate, to his atoning blood and prevailing intercession, and I am comforted.

What a conflict is within me, between the principles of a depraved nature, and the principles of piety! I am dispirited and dismayed. But I look to a faithful God and to an almighty Sanctifier: and will not He who has "begun a good work in me, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ?" Here is consolation: only let me "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

There are painful hours in the Christian life. Some ask—"Are the consolations of God small with thee?" and I reply, I am as a pining plant on which sunshine and showers fall in vain. Spiritual troubles are hard to bear. Yes: but I read

thus in Scripture—"Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." I may mourn, but I cannot murmur: I may be distressed, but I hear a voice that says—"I will not leave you comfortless."

If I am in the vale of years, "old and gray-headed," God will not forsake me. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Here is comfort in old age.

I am soon to leave this world, and to enter on an unknown state. Am I a partaker of Christ and of His Spirit? Then I only die to see a sun that never sets, to enjoy a sabbath that never ends, to walk in a paradise that never fades, and to associate with the hierarchy of Heaven, in sublime, endearing, and everlasting fellowship. How great is my consolation!

Deprive me of the gospel, and you plunge me into darkness, bitterness, and misery, without a single ray of cheering light; without a single drop of pure comfort. But having the gospel, I have every thing that is needful to render me happy. Only let me seek divine grace, that I may know and improve my blessings, and then all is well with me, and will be for ever well with me.

O my Soul! meditate on the divine goodness. Be penitent all thy days on account of depravity and sin; on account of unfaithfulness, unthankfulness, and unprofitableness. But see also thy consolations. The love of God, the grace of Christ, the communion of the Spirit; Providence ordering

every thing for thy good; unfailing support under trials; protection in danger; strength sufficient for thy day; and, finally, the sufferings and imperfections of time, ending in the enjoyments and perfection of eternity—consider these things; and are they not sufficient sources of comfort? Jehovah—speak it with joy and trembling—Jehovah is thy Comforter. He is thy portion. Admire, yea, be astonished at, the divine goodness. Be humble, believing, and devout. Be thankful, spiritual, holy, and obedient. Walk humbly with thy God: follow hard after Him in Christ Jesus. Look well to the divine life within thee; and look well to thy outward conversation. As thou truly believest in Christ, and partakest of the Spirit, and bringest forth the fruits of that faith and of that participation, so shall thy peace and thy consolation abound.

O gracious God, how unspeakable is thy goodness to the children of men! Thou hast made, in thy fatherly love, an abundant provision not only for our salvation, but also for our comfort and happiness. Truly, thy mercies, thy tender compassions, have been manifested in the greatest abundance. In all the trials and changes, in all the sorrows and distresses of the present state, grant that I may enjoy the consolations of thy word. Let thy comforts delight my soul. Let these be my support and joy at all times during my mortal pilgrimage, until I arrive at that state where sorrow is unknown, and participate the pure and perfect bliss of Heaven, through the merits and intercession of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JONES.

REVIEW OF LIFE.

WHAT a variety of pleasing and painful thoughts and feelings does the recollection of past years excite in the mind! I have seen days of prosperity and gladness, and days of adversity and sorrow. I have enjoyed the love of relatives and friends, and conversed with the wise and good. But many of those who were the nearest and dearest to me, are gone down to the grave; and I stand like an aged tree, surrounded with a new generation. The spring is past; the summer is ended: the autumn is almost closing, and winter is at hand.

Shall I indulge in sadness and grief? No: I would most thankfully acknowledge the divine goodness. I have enjoyed numberless blessings; and I now put my severest trials among them.

What blessings in Providence have I to recount! God has preserved me, provided for me, guided me, and "done all things well." I have had friends and benefactors. The evil which I feared, did not befall me: and good things which I never expected, have been granted me. Truly, it becomes me to be thankful.

When I look to spiritual blessings, how shall I express my gratitude? I might have been left to spend my years in ignorance, pride, and folly; but in the tender mercy of the Most High, I have been made acquainted with the way of life, and peace, and everlasting blessedness. I might have been at this moment a careless, presuming, miserable trifler on the borders of eternity: but "by the grace of God, I am what I am."

But what shall I say, on the review of my conduct? What have I rendered to the Lord for all his benefits? What have I done for his glory, and

for the good of men? When I look on the talents committed to my care, what shall I say respecting my use or abuse of them? Have I faithfully improved my spiritual blessings, and lived as a true follower of Christ?

Alas! I have not fully and rightly improved any talent; any mercy; any portion of the divine bounty. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

But I trust that, through divine grace, I have not been altogether faithless, inactive, and useless. I have reason to be ashamed and penitent; but I have reason also to be thankful and to rejoice. I have not wholly forgotten God, and his word, and the duty of the true Christian.

I now find it an easy thing to discover how I should have acted; what I ought to have done: and I chide myself for my former indolence and perverseness. How much of life has been wasted in doing nothing! How much of it has been spent in fine speculations, airy fancies, specious purposes, and inefficient resolves! How small a portion of it has been properly spent in the acquisition of good for myself, and in doing good for the benefit of others!

What reason have I to admire the goodness and forbearance of God! I would magnify his grace, by which I am what I am; by which only I have been enabled to order my conversation in any measure aright. I would magnify that grace which has done great things for me: but I would take shame and confusion to myself, when I consider how little I have done for my divine Benefactor.

I acknowledge my numberless transgressions and my unprofitableness: and I extol the divine

goodness, by which, I trust, I have been redeemed from ignorance, sin, and death: and I cannot refuse to cherish the hope, that He who has been good to me will yet continue his goodness to me, and that I shall praise Him for ever—Jehovah—Father, Son, and Spirit—the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

O my Soul! thou hast been made to take the Bible for thy teacher and guide. Thou hast been enabled to receive, in some measure, the offered blessings, and to rejoice in the consolations, of the gospel of Christ. Thou knowest spiritual things in a spiritual manner. Be humble and penitent, as thou considerest thy past misconduct; and gratefully acknowledge the divine goodness. While the outward man totters and decays, while this world is receding and fading from thy view, let faith prevail, and let thy language be gratitude and praise. "My lips shall greatly rejoice, when I sing unto Thee; and my soul, which Thou hast redeemed. My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long."

Thou art now, O my Soul, standing, as it were, upon an eminence, from which thou mayest see the past and the future. Behind thee is a world with which thou hast been for a long time familiar, and in which thy pilgrimage is coming to a close. Before thee is the remnant of thy days, and then a world without limits and without change; a world that is everlasting.

Value, O my Soul! the remnant of thy life on earth. Use greater diligence and fidelity, and let thy last days be thy best days. Be thou the courageous soldier and the laborious servant of Christ, even till the sun descends, and thou art dismissed for ever from conflict and from toil. Weaned from

a world which thou art about to leave, and breathing the spirit of that world on which thou art about to enter, the conclusion of thy mortal course shall be like a fine autumnal evening: it may have its clouds and dark shades; but a mellow effulgence shall shine forth; and thou shalt depart in faith, hope, and peace.

Most merciful and gracious God, I thankfully acknowledge thy goodness to me during all my days. Mercy and goodness have hitherto followed me. "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." Make me penitent and humble, thankful and joyful; and enable me to spend the residue of life to thy glory, and to the good of my fellow-creatures; through Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

JONES.

THE GRAVE.

"MAN goeth to his long home;" to "the house appointed for all living." "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master."

As a flower of the field, so man springs up, grows, flourishes, and fades, and disappears. He may be cut off in the morning, or in the midst of his days, or his existence may be prolonged to old age; but every step that he takes on earth is a step towards the grave. The day will come when the frail tenement shall be consigned to the dust. "I have said to Corruption, Thou art my father; to the Worm, Thou art my mother and my sister."

This world will soon be to me a mere nothing. I shall exist: but I shall be a stranger to the plans, cares, sorrows, and vicissitudes of my successors in this vale of tears. I shall soon be forgotten; and ages will revolve, and generation succeed to generation, while this dust and ashes shall be mingled with the clods of the valley, and with the elements of nature.

But while I meditate on what lies before me, let me not fail to gather substantial improvement from the subject. Lessons of piety are the valuable lessons. While, then, I look upon the grave, let me learn the necessity of dying to the world, before I die in it. Let me be urged to lay up treasures for that state of being where there is no change and no end.

Is the grave to be ere long my dwelling? How then can I fix my heart on earthly things? The rich, and great, and wise, and powerful among men go down to the chambers of silence. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." The shroud, the coffin, the bier, and the grave—these teach me the emptiness of the world, and the vanity and folly of ambition and avarice. I think of these, and the pageantry of the world melts from my view as a gilded shadow.

Is the grave to be ere long my dwelling? How can I regard pleasure and gratification as my chief good! How can I be anxious to adorn the body with fashion and finery! I think on the grave, and I am compelled to own that I act a most unworthy part, if I allow for a moment the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, to be my masters.

Is the grave to be ere long my dwelling? Then let me look to things that survive the desolation of the grave. The immaterial soul is to act its part in an imperishable world, where it will be rich or poor, glorious or degraded, happy or miserable for ever. The body shall slumber in the grave for a season; but the soul is immortal. It is, then, my wisdom to love, and seek, and esteem, and pursue those things which will never decay; over which death and the grave have no dominion; that I may be rich, and happy, yea blessed, for evermore.

It is easy in a pensive hour to think and speak as a mortal and immortal being. The thought of mortality solemnizes the mind and softens the heart. It compels us to turn away from alluring vanities. Immortality is a sublime theme, which leads us to the heights of magnificence, and to the perfection of beauty. But, alas! how forgetful am I of both these subjects in the ordinary course of life! I reason and feel as if the years of human life were nothing, and then I go and act as if they were every thing.

Here is my sin, folly, and perverseness. But shall I not labour to correct it? Shall not thoughtfulness supersede frivolity? Shall I not quit my tenacious hold of earthly things? Shall I not be in heart and life what I am in ideas and language, a stranger, a sojourner, a pilgrim upon earth? Shall I not renounce pride, ambition, avarice, hatred, anger, and all unholy feelings, when I consider that I am soon to lie down in the grave?

It is easy to think and speak well; but it is difficult to act well. So strong is the inherent evil, so powerful is the attraction of the world, and so numerous are the objects that distract the human mind, that we are far, very far indeed from being

what we ought to be. But divine grace is omnipotent. If we seek it, we shall obtain it; and then we shall be "wise, and consider our latter end."

O my Soul! let me often meditate on the grave. There, indeed, thou wilt not enter; for when the frail dust lodges there, thou wilt be in another world. Let thy attention, then, be faithfully given to the gospel of Christ, to the great things of religion, that it may be well with thee. Strive to live more and more as one who is to live here only for a little time, and who is to live in another state for ever. In the strength of divine grace, rise more above the world; rise more above the hostile power of flesh and blood; rise higher towards thy God and Saviour, and things invisible; press nearer to them. Then thou mayest view the brevity of time, the decay of nature, and the triumph of the grave, with dignified serenity; for eternal life is thy inheritance.

O blessed and glorious God, the author of all good, enable me not only to meditate on serious things, but also to profit by my meditations on them. Enable me, by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, so to believe and live, that I may go down to the grave in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

JONES.

RESURRECTION.

"MARVEL not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done

good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Such is the declaration of our blessed Lord, and it leads us to consider a most glorious and solemn subject. If we regard the power of God, it is not incredible that he should raise the dead: and if we regard his truth, it is certain that he will raise them.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth," and that He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." I will perplex myself with no vain speculations: I know but little of the human body; of its materials, and of its wonderful and fearful make: the more I reflect, the more I am a mystery to myself.

Man will go down to the grave, and he will rise again. O what a solemn and glorious day, when the purpose of God respecting our race upon earth shall be completed; when the voice of the trumpet shall be heard through creation, and the dead shall hear its summons and come forth; and when we all shall see the morning of eternity! The kingdom of grace now merges and is lost in the kingdom of glory.

What a day of anguish will this be to the ungodly! In the time of their probation they refused divine mercy: and when the season of retribution arrives, they rise to "shame and everlasting contempt." But how glorious will this day be to the faithful servants of Christ! They stand before their approving Judge, and are received into celestial habitations.

Who can declare the blessedness of the righteous! Here they have a body of infirmity; here

they are defiled with sin. Disease, and pain, and weariness, and sorrow, are their portion on earth. The flesh is an enemy to the soul; at the best it is an impediment to all its nobler workings; and it is our duty to keep it in subjection.

But when they rise in the last day, they rise spiritual bodies. I cannot know at present what these are; but the words of Scripture are clear—"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The raised body will be immortal, pure, the fit abode, through eternal ages, of a redeemed, sanctified, and exalted soul; it will be capable of enjoying the glory and felicity of heaven in the presence of God.

Here I may rest with unshaken faith. In the risen Saviour I see the pledge and pattern of my own resurrection. He descended into the grave; and we shall descend into it. He did not see corruption: but this we shall see. He rose again: and we shall be raised by His power, and shall then be with Him for ever. Such is the prospect that lies before His true followers.

How painful is the hour of death! How dark are the chambers of the grave! Thus I exclaim; and feelings of sadness and alarm rush upon my anxious breast. Where is light? Where is consolation? They are found in those words of Scripture,—"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thou, O Saviour, who hast tasted the bitter cup, wilt not forsake me in death: and when the appointed time shall arrive, Thou wilt bid my slumbering ashes to quit the prison of the grave.

O my Soul! often think of that day when thou shalt see the Lord Jesus as the Judge of all man-

kind: and in the anticipation of it, be it thy prayer that thou mayest "know Him and the power of His resurrection." Be it thy study to live here as one who shall stand before His tribunal, and give an account of thyself to Him. Always remember, that the spiritual resurrection of grace here is essential to the resurrection to glory in the last day.

Look often forward, O my soul, to the morning of the resurrection: and let the remembrance of it inspire thee with peace and joy among the confusion and sorrow of the present state: let it increase thy love to Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life;" and let it urge thee to decision and diligence in the cultivation of all that fits thee to stand before Him at his appearing.

O glorious Morning—the Morning of Eternity! The ills of time will then be forgotten, as though they had never been. Then frail mortality will be swallowed up of life; and henceforth nothing will be known, seen, and felt, but immortality, and blessedness, and heaven. How delightful the thought! How rapturous the prospect!

But let me carefully attend, for this is the point of true wisdom, to the plain and practical improvement of the subject; giving all diligence to "perfect holiness in the fear of God;" holiness both of body and soul; holiness in all my purposes and proceedings; fully persuaded that he will hail most joyfully the day of the resurrection, who dies most completely to sin, and who rises highest into the light of truth and into the life of holiness.

O glorious and blessed God, grant, that by thy word and Holy Spirit, I may truly know thy Son Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life; that, being here a partaker of Him, and following

Him in faith, love, and obedience, I may in the last day obtain the resurrection of the just, and enter on the fruition of eternal felicity; for the sake, and through the merits of Him who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JONES.

JUDGMENT

"AND I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." Rev. xx. 12, 13.

Various portions of Scripture assure us of a day of account; of a day in which God will "judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts xvii. 31.

Let me not meditate on the day of judgment to propose questions which no ingenuity can solve, but to strengthen my faith, and to urge me to live more and more in agreement with the gospel.—The day of judgment is the day of universal assembly; of examination; of discovery; of final decision; of everlasting separation. To what serious and awful considerations am I led by each of the expressions which I have here used!

Alas! comparatively few seem properly to medi-

tate on this eventful day. How does the rich man use his wealth; the great man his influence; and the scholar his learning? How do men in general use their time and talents in their several stations? Do not most men live as if there were no day of account; as if they might live with impunity according to their own will?

But do serious Christians remember the day of judgment as they ought? They know that the Lord Jesus will come on the throne of His glory, that all men will be assembled before Him, and that He will give to every man according to what he has done in the body. With this knowledge and admission, do they duly remember that emphatical question? "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" We speak of the day of judgment; and yet we live too much as if we should never be judged.

Let me bring the subject home to my own soul. "Every man shall give account of himself to God." I shall see that solemn day; I shall behold the Judge; I shall give an account of myself to Him; I shall stand on his right hand, or on his left; I shall hear the summons to glory, or the sentence to banishment and woe.

Surely I ought to think often of these things, and to allow them to sink into my heart, and to influence my conduct and conversation in the world. Can I possibly employ my time and talents vainly and foolishly, when I remember the day of account? My inquiry, in the anticipation of that day, always ought to be, What does the gospel require me to be and to do? Am I acting in such a manner as to be approved at last?

If I look on my former days, I see abundant cause for repentance. Tell me not of my virtues, or of my good actions. My sins, imperfections, omissions, and unprofitableness, are ever before me. Where is my refuge? Where is my hope? "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."

I look on the present, and then forward to the future. Thou knowest, O Lord, my weakness and corruption. In vain, while thinking on the solemnities of the last day, do I make resolves, unless Thou art pleased to give me power to act in agreement with them. It is only through thy mercy and grace, O Lord, that I can live wisely and faithfully, superior to my spiritual adversaries, and diligent in the improvement of my talents, so that I may finally give an account of myself before Thy tribunal, with joy and honour.

Ye careless Christians! think of the future judgment, and begin to be earnest about your salvation. Here you may shine in splendour, or riot in pleasure, or waste your time in idleness and vanity: but what will your condition be in that day, if your life be spent in mere worldliness, and if the momentous concerns of the soul and eternity be now treated with careless and cold indifference?

Ye faithful followers of Christ! think of the future judgment, and be not "weary in well doing." Improve your talents, as responsible beings. Let your faith be productive of good works. Strive to do good in your day and generation. Be diligent and persevering. Thus your honour will be great before an assembled world. Is it not thus written? "Who will render to every man according to his

deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."

O my Soul! think thou of the future judgment, and remember that no sin will then escape detection, and no good thing will then go unrewarded. Let all thou art, and all thou hast, be employed to the glory of God. While thou confidest in redeeming mercy, let the consideration of the last day urge thee to be watchful and diligent in working out thy salvation with fear and trembling.

Holy and merciful God, thy word assures me of a judgment to come; may I duly consider that awful day, and be enabled through thy grace so to believe, and to order my conversation in all things, that I may be found to have been a good and faithful servant. Grant this, I beseech Thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

JONES.

THE PROBABILITY OF KNOWING EACH OTHER IN A FUTURE STATE.

(In a Letter from the Poet Cowper, to Mrs. Cowper.)

MY DEAR COUSIN,

As in matters unattainable by reason, and unrevealed in the Scripture, it is impossible to argue at all; so in matters concerning which reason can only give a probable guess, and the Scripture has made no explicit discovery, it is, though not impossible to argue at all, yet impossible to argue to any certain conclusion. This seems to me to be the very case with the point in question—reason is

able to form many plausible conjectures concerning the possibility of our knowing each other in a future state; and the scripture has, here and there, favoured us with an expression that looks at least like a slight intimation of it; but because a conjecture can never amount to a proof, and a slight intimation can not be construed into a positive assertion, therefore I think we can never come to any absolute conclusion upon the subject. We may indeed reason about the plausibility of our conjectures, and we may discuss, with great industry and shrewdness of argument, those passages in the scripture which seem to favour the opinion; but still, no certain means having been afforded us, no certain end can be attained; and after all that can be said, it will still be doubtful whether we shall know each other or not.

As to arguments founded upon human reason only, it would be easy to muster up a much greater number on the affirmative side of the question, than it would be worth my while to write, or yours to read. Let us see, therefore, what the scripture says, or seems to say, towards the proof of it: and of this kind of argument also I shall insert but a few of those which seem to me to be the fairest and clearest for the purpose. For after all, a disputant on either side of this question is in danger of that censure of our blessed Lord's, "Ye do err, not knowing the scripture, nor the power of God."

As to parables, I know it has been said, in the dispute concerning the intermediate state, that they are not argumentative; but this having been controverted by very wise and good men, and the parables of Dives and Lazarus having been used by such to prove an intermediate state, I see not why it may not be as fairly used for the proof of any

other matter which it seems fairly to imply. In this parable we see that Dives is represented as knowing Lazarus, and Abraham as knowing them both, and the discourse between them is entirely concerning their respective characters and circumstances upon earth. Here, therefore, our Saviour seems to countenance the notion of a mutual knowledge and recollection; and if a soul that has perished shall know the soul that is saved, surely the heirs of salvation shall know and recollect each other.

In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, and nineteenth verse, St. Paul says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy."

As to the hope which the apostle has formed concerning them, he himself refers the accomplishment of it to the coming of Christ, meaning that then he should receive the recompense of his labours in their behalf; his joy and glory he refers likewise to the same period, both which would result from the sight of such numbers redeemed by the blessing of God upon his ministration, when he should present them before the great Judge, and say, in the words of a greater than himself, "Lo! I, and the children whom thou hast given me." This seems to imply that the apostle should know the converts, and the converts the apostle, at least at the day of Judgment; and if then, why not afterwards?

See also the fourth chapter of that epistle, verses 13, 14, 16, which I have not room to transcribe. Here the apostle comforts them under their affliction for their deceased brethren, exhorting them

"Not to sorrow, as without hope;" and what is the hope by which he teaches them to support their spirits? Even this, "That them which sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him." In other words, and by a fair paraphrase surely, telling them that they are only taken from them for a season, and that they should receive them at their resurrection.

If you can take off the force of these texts, my dear cousin, you will go a great way towards shaking my opinion; if not, I think they must go a great way towards shaking yours.

The reason why I did not send you my opinion of Pearsall was, because I had not then read him; I have read him since, and like him much, especially the latter part of him; but you have whetted my curiosity to see the last letter by tearing it out: unless you can give me a good reason why I should not see it, I shall inquire for the book the first time I go to Cambridge. Perhaps I may be partial to Hervey for the sake of his other writings; but I cannot give Pearsall the preference to him, for I think him one of the most scriptural writers in the world.

COWPER.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

AMONGST the pleasures and employments of heaven, that of *the knowledge of, and the converse which the saints will have with one another*, appears to hold an exceedingly prominent place. The inhabitants are always represented as a society, and as a family continually in the presence of each other. We are told of elders *together*, of many angels *together*, and of an innumerable multitude *together*, singing one song, even the song of Moses

and the Lamb. "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

Now, as we can have no idea of a society always existing together, without its members being intimately known to each other, so we can form no idea of the society of heaven, without the same conception. Indeed, this sentiment is plainly conveyed to us in the words of the Saviour, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;" for it could not with propriety be said, that we should sit down with these three patriarchs, if we did not know them, and were not able to recognize them in particular amidst the innumerable company.

If it be true, therefore, that we shall know Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, men whom we have never seen on earth, much more true is it likely to be, that we shall know those pious persons whom we have seen, and with whom we have been intimately acquainted in this world.

The apostle, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, writes, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so to them also who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." This language evidently implies, that pious friends here, though separated by death, will meet again at the resurrection; for if this be not intended, there does not

appear to be any meaning in the apostle's words. He writes to the Thessalonians to comfort them under the loss of some of their fellow Christians, and he tells them not to sorrow as those without hope. And what is that hope? "That them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him;" words which plainly intimate that the separation occasioned by death was only for a time, and that parted friends should meet again. And if they are to meet again, what comfort can there be in the thought of meeting, unless we suppose that each will be fully known to the other?

That every inhabitant of the blissful world will be as much distinguished from all the rest, as one man is distinguished from another in this world, is a sentiment fully supported by the word of God. And though John says, that when Christ shall appear, the righteous will be like him; yet that same apostle, in the apocalyptic vision, saw that the righteous and the Saviour were not so much alike, but that he could distinguish the Lamb amidst the throng, that he could mark the elders amidst the angels, and that he could know the martyrs amidst the innumerable company. And to this same apostle, along with James and Peter, it was also granted on the mount of transfiguration, to see that there was such a difference between one celestial inhabitant and another, that Moses could be plainly distinguished from his companion Elias.

If, therefore, every heavenly inhabitant is to preserve his own special identity; and if we are to be blessed with the faculty of vision,—a truth which none will dispute,—what then will prevent our recognizing all the pious whom we have known, and with whom we have been associated on earth? The thought is delightful; and its delight is in-

creased because the fact is certain. The dead in Christ have only reached their home first; but as their home is to be our home, and their abode to be our abode, at the appointed time we shall meet again, and the joy of meeting will be increased by the temporary separation. LESLIE.

ON THE RECOLLECTION OF EARTHLY AFFAIRS BY DEPARTED SPIRITS.

(In a letter from Cowper to Mrs. Cowper.)

MY DEAR COUSIN,

HAVING gone as far as I thought needful to justify the opinion of our meeting and knowing each other hereafter, I find, upon reflection, that I have done but half my business, and that one of the questions you proposed, remains entirely unconsidered, viz. "Whether the things of our present state will not be of too low and mean a nature to engage our thoughts, or make a part of our communications in heaven."

The common and ordinary occurrences of life, no doubt, and even the ties of kindred, and of all temporal interests, will be entirely discarded from amongst that happy society; and possibly even the remembrance of them done away. But it does not therefore follow that our spiritual concerns, even in this life, will be forgotten; neither do I think that they can ever appear trifling to us in any the most distant period of eternity. God, as you say in reference to the scripture, will be all in all. But does not that expression mean, that being admitted to so near an approach to our heavenly Father and Redeemer, our whole nature, the soul and all its faculties, will be employed in praising and adoring him? Doubtless, however, this will be

the case; and if so, will it not furnish out a glorious theme of thanksgiving, to recollect "The rock whence we were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we were digged?" To recollect the time when our faith, which under the tuition and nurture of the Holy Spirit has produced such a plentiful harvest of immortal bliss, was as a grain of mustard-seed, small in itself, promising but little fruit, and producing less? To recollect the various attempts that were made upon it, by the world, the flesh, and the devil, and its various triumphs over all, by the assistance of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? At present, whatever our convictions may be of the sinfulness and corruption of our nature, we can make but a very imperfect estimate either of our weakness or our guilt. Then, no doubt, we shall understand the full value of the wonderful salvation wrought out for us: and it seems reasonable to suppose, that, in order to form a just idea of our redemption, we shall be able to form a just one of the danger we have escaped; when we know how weak and frail we were, surely we shall be more able to render due praise and honour to his strength who fought for us; when we know completely the hatefulness of sin in the sight of God, and how deeply we were tainted by it, we shall know how to value the blood by which we were cleansed as we ought. The twenty-four elders, in the fifth of the Revelations, give glory to God for their redemption out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. This surely implies a retrospect to their respective conditions upon earth, and that each remembered out of what particular kindred and nation he had been redeemed; and if so, then surely the minutest circumstance of their redemption did not

escape their memory. They who triumph over the beast, in the fifteenth chapter, sing the song of Moses, the servant of God; and what was that song? A sublime record of Israel's deliverance, and the destruction of her enemies in the Red Sea, typical no doubt of the song which the redeemed in Sion shall sing to celebrate their own salvation, and the defeat of their spiritual enemies. This, again, implies a recollection of the dangers they had before encountered, and the supplies of strength and ardour they had in every emergency received from the great deliverer out of all. These quotations do not indeed prove that their warfare upon earth includes a part of their converse with each other, but they prove that it is a theme not unworthy to be heard even before the throne of God, and therefore it can not be unfit for reciprocal communication.

But you doubt whether there is *any* communication between the blessed at all: neither do I recollect any scripture that proves it, or that bears any relation to the subject. But reason seems to require it so peremptorily, that a society without social intercourse seems to be a solecism, and a contradiction in terms; and the inhabitants of those regions are called, you know, an innumerable *company* and an *assembly*, which seems to convey the idea of society as clearly as the word itself. Human testimony weighs but little in matters of this sort, but let it have all the weight it can: I know no greater names in divinity than Watts and Doddridge; they were both of this opinion, and I send you the words of the latter:—

"Our *companions in glory* may probably assist us by their wise and good observations, when we come to make the *providence of God*, here upon

earth, under the guidance and direction of our Lord Jesus Christ, the *subject of our mutual converse.*"

Thus, my dear cousin, I have spread out my reasons before you for an opinion which, whether admitted or denied, affects not the state or interest of our soul. May our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, conduct us into his own Jerusalem; where there shall be no night, neither any darkness at all; where we shall be free even from innocent error, and perfect in the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

COWPER.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

IT is reckoned, you know, a great achievement to silence an opponent in disputation; and your silence was of so long a continuance, that I might well begin to please myself with the apprehension of having accomplished so arduous a matter. To be serious, however, I am not sorry that what I have said concerning our knowledge of each other in a future state has a little inclined you to the affirmative. For though the redeemed of the Lord shall be sure of being as happy in that state as infinite power, employed by infinite goodness, can make them; and therefore it may seem immaterial whether we shall or shall not, recollect each other hereafter, yet our present happiness at least is a little interested in the question. A parent, a friend, a wife, must needs, I think, feel a little heartache at the thought of an eternal separation from the objects of her regard; and not to know them when she meets them in another life, or never to meet

them at all, amounts, though not altogether, yet nearly to the same thing. Remember them I think she needs must. To hear that they are happy, will indeed be no small addition to her own felicity; but to see them so will surely be a greater. Thus at least it appears to our present human apprehension; consequently, therefore, to think that when we leave them, we lose them for ever, that we must remain entirely ignorant whether they, that were flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, partake with us of celestial glory, or are disinherited of their heavenly portion, must shed a dismal gloom over all our present connexions. For my own part, this life is such a momentary thing, and all its interests have so shrunk in my estimation, since by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ I became attentive to the things of another, that, like a worm in the bud of all my friendships and affections, this very thought would eat out the heart of them all, had I a thousand; and were their date to terminate with this life, I think I should have no inclination to cultivate and improve such a fugitive business. Yet friendship is necessary to our happiness here; and built upon christian principles, upon which only it can stand, is a thing even of religious sanction—for what is that love which the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. John, so much inculcates, but friendship? the only love which deserves the name; a love which can toil, and watch, and deny itself, and go to death for its brother. Worldly friendships are a poor weed compared with this: and even this union of spirit in the bond of peace would suffer, in my mind at least, could I think it were only coeval with our earthly mansions. It may possibly argue great weakness in me, in this instance, to stand so much

in need of future hopes to support me in the discharge of present duty. But so it is—I am far, I know, very far from being perfect in christian love, or any other divine attainment, and am therefore unwilling to forego whatever may help me in my progress.

COWPER.

THE PROMISE OF REST TO THE CHRISTIAN.

WHEN we consider the conflicts and the trials of the conscientious, watchful, praying Christian, we shall estimate aright the value of the consoling promise of that eternal rest from his labours, which supports him under them. And though *rest* is one of the lowest descriptions of the promised bliss of heaven, yet it holds out a cheering prospect of relief and satisfaction to a feeling being, who is conscious of the fallen condition of his mortal nature in all its weakness and imperfection. *Rest*, therefore, is of itself a promise sufficiently inviting to make him desire to depart and to be with Christ, even independently of his higher hope. The joy unspeakable, the crown of glory, and all those other splendid images of the blessedness of heaven, exalt and delight his mind. But it is, though with a higher, yet with a more indefinite delight. He adores without fully comprehending the mighty blessing. But the promise of rest is more intelligible to the heavy-laden Christian; he better understands it, because it is so exactly applicable to his present want and feelings:—*this* is not our rest. It offers the relief longed for by a weary, frail, and feverish being. He who best knows what man wanted, promised to his disciples *peace and rest*, and His Divine Spirit has represented the state

of heaven under this image more frequently than any other, as being in more direct contrast to its present state—a state of care, anxiety, and trouble, and a state of sin, the cause of all his other troubles. Perhaps this less elevated view of heaven may occur more rarely to persons of high-wrought feelings in religion, yet to the Christian of a contrary character, it is a never-failing consolation, a home-felt solace, the object of his fervent prayer. What a support to be persuaded that 'the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever!'

H. More.

THE WITHERED LEAF.

A WITHERED leaf, is this day to be our preacher. What are some of the truths it proclaims, and in which it is wisely adapted and mercifully intended to instruct us? It instructs us in the following:—

1st. *The frailty and shortness of life.*

What object in nature is frailer than a withered leaf adhering to the bough by a single thread, and ready to be carried away by the first and feeblest breath of wind. Not more frail, however, is the withered leaf even, than is man that is born of a woman. Consider him in infancy: what object more frail than a human weakling—the infant in the cradle—the babe at the breast! Is it not the very type of all weakness and all frailty—full of wants, yet without the smallest power to supply them or to make them known; exposed to dangers which he does not foresee, and which, if he did, he could not control? If others do not feed him, he must perish of hunger; if others do not give him drink, he must perish of thirst; if others do not

clothe him, he must perish of cold. Surely on the whole earth there is not a creature more frail and more helpless! Consider him in the pride and vigour of manhood: even in this period of life, how like a leaf wasted and driven by the wind! When he imagines his mountain stands strong, and that nothing can move him—when he exalts himself as a god, how weak, indigent, and insufficient—subject to every breath and to every blast! Is he on the sea?—see how its waves whirl him where they will! Is he on the land?—see how the winds scorn his bidding, the storm how it mocks his prospects, the hurricane how it lays his dwelling in ruins! thus, even when standing, is he not liable to fall—when rich to become poor—when strong to become weak? In life is he not every moment liable and ready to die? Thus poor is man in his best estate; thus sure is it that "each man is vanity." Consider him in old age: is the withered and wasted leaf of winter more withered or more wasted? His eyes how dim, his ear how dull, his limbs how shrunken, his breathing how short and how difficult; how like a walking shadow, a living death; the evil days have come upon him, he is fallen into the "sere and yellow leaf!" Such is man, in infancy, manhood, and old age; nor is he thus frail, but how short-lived as well as frail! To denote the shortness of man's existence, it is Jeremy Taylor, we think, who remarks that the wise men of the world have contended, as it were, who should denote its shortness by the fittest figures. By one it is likened to a shadow; by another to the shadow of a shade; by another to a vapour; by another to the swift ships; by another to the eagle that hasteth to its prey; by another to the weaver's shuttle: the day

casts it to the night, and the night to the day, till the web of life is spun, and cut from the beam of time. By the prophet it is compared to a leaf. Short is the duration of a leaf: such, however, is the life of man—as short in its duration as it is frail in its texture and fading in its kind. In the withered leaves, then, that at this season of the year are strewing your path, see, my brethren, the emblem of your condition. Think not more highly of yourselves than you ought to do: look to that withered leaf; like it you are frail, and like it you are fading, and like it you will soon be carried away for ever. If you shall be more deeply impressed with these truths this day than you have hitherto been; if you shall form a truer estimate of your condition than you may have hitherto done; if you shall be instructed more fully in, or be impressed more deeply with, the frailty and shortness of life, this leaf will not have faded and fallen, nor shall we have discoursed from it to you this day, in vain. But not only does the withered leaf instruct us in the conditions of life, it instructs us also in the conditions of death; and this it does,

First. *In the nature of death.*

A leaf that, having withered on the tree, has fallen to the ground, is a separated, a disunited thing. It is disunited from its parent tree, it is separated from its sister leaves. Such is death. It is a separation, a disuniting; it is the separation, first of all, of the soul and body. As the union of soul and body constitutes natural life, the separation of soul and body constitutes natural death. This separation every man living must undergo: fatal to man is the neglect of this great truth. Neglect it not, my brethren: when you

see a leaf separated from its parent tree, let it remind you of the separation that must one day take place between the body and the soul; let it remind you that you shall not always, as you now do, see through the medium of the eye, and hear through the medium of the ear, and think through the medium of the brain. There is a spiritual world: to that world you belong; in that world as pure spirits you shall exist; on the verge of that spiritual world you are at this moment standing; upon it you are soon to enter; in that world you shall continue to see, but not through the medium of the eye; you shall continue to hear, but not through the medium of the ear; you shall continue to think, but not through the medium of the brain; then all that is in this world as to you—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, shall come to an end. Now, if it should be the case that your happiness is now consisting in the seeing of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, or the gratification of the senses—in the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and in the pride of life; if your happiness consists in, and is dependent on what is material, what is to become of you in that world that is spiritual? If your supreme happiness consist in aught that is earthly, in what shall it consist, when the world in which you are to dwell, and you yourselves, shall no longer be of the "earth earthly," and when from all that is earthly, its possessions and its enjoyments, you shall be torn away for ever? If your happiness is connected with time, and the things of time, in what will you find happiness when time and the things of time shall be no more? Think of this, ye who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; think of this, ye

who are seeking and finding your chief enjoyment in the pursuits and the pleasures of this passing and this perishing world. Hear it, men and brethren! take it from my lips as the word of God, that a happiness springing from, and ending with time, is no happiness—it has the show, but not the substance; it is a happiness that might content us if we were mortal only, but is no portion for an immortal soul. True happiness is an abiding happiness; the true happiness of an everlasting being is a happiness that, like himself, is everlasting. But what is this true and everlasting happiness? in what does it consist? In "doing the will of God." A life spent in doing the will of God, is a life of happiness; a life spent in contravening the will of God, is and must be a life of essential misery. Into such a life, a life of simply doing the will of God, now, my brethren, now that you are, and while you are in the body, enter; for into this life there is no entrance in the world to come. Of good or evil in the world to come there is no first choice; such a choice must be made here; and the choice that is made here, is the choice that is ratified hereafter. You are now either doing the will of God, or you are doing your own; if you are doing your own, you are sowing to the flesh, and shall of the flesh reap a harvest of corruption; if you are doing the will of God, you are sowing to the Spirit, and of the Spirit and in the Spirit you shall reap a harvest of life eternal. But not only does death separate the soul and the body, it separates and disunites us from our relations and our friends. Very mysterious and deep, as you know well, is the affection we cherish for our relations and kinsmen according to the flesh. Do we hear, for example, of the

sickness of a parent or a child, of a sister or a brother—with what eagerness and trepidation do we hasten to their bedside; with what interest do we gaze on their wan and wasted countenances; how anxiously do we watch the progress of the disease; with what pure delight do we witness the first dawning of recovery! On the other hand, when we often look but look in vain, when it is but too plain that they are dying, how does our heart sicken and die! And when at length death has completed his prey; when the eye is broken from whose look of love our heart drew its sweetest solace; when the spirit of the beloved object has fled, and all that remains to us is the cold, silent, and inanimate clay, how dreadful is the blow! We are overwhelmed with a sorrow we can scarcely bear, and the bitterness of which words are wanting to express. In our journey through life, many are the clouds which darken our path, and many are the events, the tendency of which is to bruise our spirit and to break our heart; but there is no event so solemn and so sad as that which converts our homes into a house of mourning, and stretches one of our nearest and dearest relations on the bed of death. Yet, all painful as this event is, it is one which we may expect to meet, and to meet which we should at all times be prepared. Among the mourners, of whom the earth is full, how many are at this moment uttering the language of the orphan children of Jerusalem—language "every letter of which seems written with a tear, and every word of which seems the sound of a broken heart:"—"We are orphans and fatherless, and our mothers are as widows." How many fond parents, during the past year, have seen their bright and beautiful

laid in the dust, and are now left to weep over not only the flower of their flock, but the last of their race! How many husbands have stood by the bed on which the mother of their children lay dying! How many wives lately blessed with the husbands of their hearts, are now lonely and sorrowful widows! See that band of mourners; how powerful is the claim they have on your sympathy and your tears! yet, while you "weep with them that weep," weep not for them only, but weep for yourselves. Sad, it is true, is their condition; but in that condition see, my brethren, the emblems of your own. What they are now, that all of you will be at some time, and may be soon. Children, you may soon lose your parents; fond parents, you may soon lose your children: your hearths now bright with the sunshine of their happy faces may soon be darkened; your halls now vocal with their joyous voices may soon be silent. Husbands, you may soon lose "the delight of your eyes;" and you happy wives, ye may be soon lonely widows. Such being the case, what influence ought the knowledge of this to have upon your conscience and your conduct? Surely, if permitted to exercise its legitimate influence, it will excite us to an immediate and faithful discharge of the duties we owe one to another, as parents or children, as husbands or wives. Whatever, then, in this matter, thy hand findeth to do, that do with all thy might and all thy diligence, for there is no knowledge, work, or device in the grave, whither thou art fast going. If, then, you who are children, shall be stirred up to honour, from this day henceforth, your parents more highly than ever you have yet done; and if you who are parents shall be stirred up to perform those sacred and solemn duties you

owe to your children, more faithfully in all time coming, than at any time past; if the husband will be stirred up to a more faithful discharge of the duties of a husband, and the wife to a more faithful discharge of the duties of a wife; so that when the sad and solemn hour of separation, which is surely coming to all, has come, amid its blackness and its bitterness, there shall be no root of regret and remorse in the remembrance of the past, and in reviewing the history of that relationship which by the hand of death has now been severed for ever; if, we say, you shall be stirred up to such a discharge of the duties you owe one to another, by means of the reflections to which this withered leaf may give rise, we shall have no cause of regret that we have directed your attention to this topic on this day.

It is not enough, however, that we direct your attention to the death of others, let us direct it to your own. By this withered leaf, you are instructed not only in the *nature*, but in the *certainty* of death.

Nothing is more certain than the fading of the leaf: equally certain is death. When we speak of the certainty of death, we speak, it is evident, not of its certainty as to time, or manner: than these nothing is more uncertain. The seasons have their time of coming and going, and we know when they will come and go; the passage-birds have their appointed time, and we know when they will come and when they will depart; the leaf has its time to flourish and its time to fade, and we know when it will flourish and when it will fade. It is otherwise with death: "Man knoweth not its time." I am old, said Jacob, yet I know not the day of my death: equally uncer-

tain is death as to the manner of its coming. Amid all this uncertainty, however, one thing is certain —death itself. What is our life, indeed, but a constant dying—a death in life. The moment we begin to live, that moment we begin to die. I am dying while I now speak, and you are dying while you hear: every breath we take to lengthen life, shortens it; and the more we live, the less we have to live: thus do we fade as a leaf. These you may think are stale and common-place remarks. We confess they are: frequently have they been made, and frequently have they been heard; yet, frequently though such remarks respecting death and its certainty have been made, how few of you have even yet given it that consideration which its paramount importance demands! Though day unto day utters speech; though night unto night teaches man knowledge; though in every new-made grave that meets our eye; though in every newspaper that we read; though in every funeral procession we are summoned to attend, or that we see dragging its slow and sable length along our streets; though in every funeral bell that tolls the departure of another and another to the tomb; though all nature enters, as it were for our sakes, once every year into a state of death; though at this moment every sound that meets the ear, and every sight that meets the eye, is eloquent of death; though in all these we have solemn utterance and stern assurances of our approaching dissolution; yet how few of us realize this approach, so as to consider and to provide against its issues! Every species of arithmetic we will learn, but that of counting our days; every species of economy we will study, but that of setting our house in order, seeing we must die

and not live. So certain is death, it might be thought that the first and great concern of all must be to provide against its approach and its issues; yet there is nothing of which we are more forgetful; yea, this very certainty of death, instead of fixing it in our thoughts, seems to make us but the more eager to escape from its consideration, as if our *not* thinking of its approach would alter its nature, or delay its coming. My brethren, are we in our senses? Will our blindness to danger diminish or prevent danger? Will we not die, because we never think of dying? Surely we cannot think this; you cannot but know that death is advancing, and that every effort you make to exclude it from your thoughts, does in effect but bring it the nearer! To know our danger, believe it, my brethren, is the first step of safety; to prepare for its approach, to provide for its issues, when inevitable, is the highest act of wisdom. The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; it is the simple only that pass on, and are punished. Let the forewarnings of nature, then, be your forearmings; let not this season pass by unimproved; listen to the voice of nature. The voice of nature is the voice of God! God speaks to us from the dust as well as from the pulpit; and if hitherto you have lived as men who were *not* to die, live henceforth as men who *are* to die—in the full foreknowledge of the fact, live under its full influence: and that the knowledge of death's certainty and death's solemnity may issue in life's sanctity, so may you seek and find, and so help you God.

Again, while this "withered leaf" instructs us in the *certainty*, it instructs us also in the *universality* of death.

We must, said the woman of Tekoah, *all* die, and be as water spilt on the ground. That we must all die requires no reasoning to prove; sufficient is it for us to appeal to experience. Since the birth of time, how many human beings have been born into time? Time still continues, but where are those who, during its past ages, have, with their names and their actions, filled its records? The stream of time still continues to wind, but where are those who have dwelt upon its banks? We have mighty forests, and crowded cities, but where are the hands that planted the one, or that built the other? We have books written many centuries ago, but where are those by whom they were written, and those whose actions or whose lives they record? Like an aged mother, the earth still remains, but where are her children? our fathers, where are they—and the prophets, do they live for ever? We have all occupied a portion of the past, but where are those who occupied it along with us? Where are the busy hands, and where the burning hearts; where are the gleaming eyes; where are the melting voices; where are the "old familiar faces?" Ah! the busy hands are motionless; the burning hearts are cold; the gleaming eyes are dim; the melting voices are silent; and the "old familiar faces are gone." Lover, acquaintance, and friend, have been removed into darkness. A thousand times has that dark and dream-like past been peopled with the living—living forms and living voices; and a thousand times has it been emptied again. A thousand times has the earth brought forth children, and a thousand times has she been bereaved; the grave has received them, and the grave will receive us—the grave that receives all—the grave

that is never satisfied, and that never says, It is enough: thus,

Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground.
Another race the following age supplies;
They fall successive, and successive rise:
So generations in their course decay;
So flourish these when those have passed away.

In conclusion, as the text instructs us in the *nature*, *certainty*, and *universality* of death, it instructs us also in its *cause*.

Were we to enter into a country almost deserted of its inhabitants; were we to witness on every hand villages and towns laid in ruins—fields, that had been ripe even unto harvest, trampled down and soaked with blood—wells choked up, and rivers polluted with the bodies of the slain—the erections of human ingenuity dismantled and overthrown—we would naturally ask, How has all this come to pass; how has this beautiful country become the scene of such terrible calamities? When we witness the earth, in like manner, with its three kingdoms, the vegetable, the animal, and the rational, full of corruption, decay, and death, and contrast it as originally full of health, and beauty, and life; standing as we do in a world intended to be a region of life—amid the chambers of the dying, and the sepulchres of the dead; it is natural to inquire, How has this come to pass; how has pain entered into the region of pleasure; sorrow into the region of joy; decay, corruption, and death, into the regions of beauty and life? Why is it that we, who were created in the image of our Maker, do all "fade as a leaf?" Why is it

that we are born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward? Why is our sure and sad inheritance suffering, and sorrow, and death? The answer to these questions, the solution of these difficulties, is contained in the text; "Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

These are the consequences of which sin is the cause; these are the wrecks of a beautiful and blessed world, of which sin is the author. In what light, then, are we to regard sin? Has it corrupted all that was pure; has it defaced all that was beautiful in this lower world; has it filled all things with the seeds of decay and death; has it brought us under the entire and everlasting forfeiture of God's favour; has it exposed us to his wrath and his curse, not only through all this life but through all the life that is to come; has it dug a dishonoured grave for our bodies; has it kindled an intolerable and an everlasting fire for our souls; has it wrought us all this wreck; has it proved to us the source of so many and so mighty woes; and shall we love it; shall we live in its love; shall we live willingly under its power; shall we not rather hate it, weep over it, forsake it? Has God provided a salvation for us; has he proclaimed and proffered it to us—a salvation from its guilt, its pollution, its power, its curse, its very being? How should we regard the offer of this salvation; an offer made to the most abandoned and the most depraved, the most worthless and the most wicked of mankind—made to them irrespective of all merit, and all condition of any personal having, and of any personal doing—an offer of Christ's salvation for Christ's sake. How should we treat? Should we not, the moment it is offered, that mo-

ment accept it, and that with all the gratitude and the joy a boon of such a kind, provided for and proffered to persons of our character, and in our condition, is so well fitted to produce? Is it to be conceived that it should be treated otherwise? Is it to be conceived, not that it should be rejected, but that it should not be received, with this gratitude and this joy? See yon criminal on the scaffold; the preparations of death proceed. A messenger, proclaiming his errand lest he should come too late, forces a way through the crowd. A pardon! a pardon! resounds from every voice. When that sound reaches the ear of the criminal, how does it affect his heart? When a sealed pardon from royalty is unfolded, is put into his hands, how does he regard it, how does he treat it—with apathy, with neglect? See how he clasps his hands; see the hues of life returning to his cheek; see the wild but joyful light that sparkles in his eyes; see how his heart heaves; see that look of wild and delighted wonderment, as if he feared that the sights meeting his eye, and the sounds meeting his ear, were the sights and sounds of a delusive dream! Thus eagerly, thus gratefully, is the pardon received which restores the criminal to a suffering, sorrowful, and short existence in this world. With how much greater eagerness and gratitude ought that pardon to be accepted, which restores us to life eternal! Yet, to how many has this pardon been offered in vain! By how many is the salvation of the gospel—a salvation provided by the love of God, purchased by the blood of Christ, and applied by the love of the Spirit—a salvation which redeems us from the pains, the pollutions, and the punishments of hell,

which exalts us to the dignities and the glories of heaven; by how many is this salvation neglected and despised! hitherto has it been neglected; hitherto has it been refused by you. Yet it may be accepted; for yet it is offered. You are guilty, and you may be willing to remain guilty; you are depraved, and you are willing to remain depraved; you are lost, and lost you are willing to remain. Yet, however, God is not willing; yet he has not ratified your choice; yet the most guilty may be pardoned; the most depraved may be renewed; the most lost may be saved. This salvation are you willing now to accept—this salvation as a *whole*, and for Christ's sake? You now must either accept it, or reject it; *not* to accept it, know this, is to reject it. The consequences of this rejection are you willing or prepared to abide? It is a common saying, that "it *will be all one* a hundred years hence." Ay, ay, it will be *all one* as to the honours and the distinctions of time; it will be *all one* as to its glimmer and glory; *all one* whether you have been rich, or whether you have been poor; *all one* whether you have been a wandering beggar, or a crowned king; but when a thousand years have come and gone, will it be *all one* whether that thousand years has been spent amid the sanctities and the glories of heaven, or amid the pollutions and the pains of hell? Oh, no, that will not be *all one*. As it will not be *all one* then, neither is it *all one* now; for, according to your "sowing" here, will be, and must be, your "reaping" hereafter.

ANDERSON.

PRESENT ENJOYMENTS, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

SWEET is the privilege of prayer,
To bow before a throne of grace,
To leave our every burden there,
And gain new strength to run our race;
To gird our heavenly armour on,
Depending on the Lord alone!

And sweet the whisper of his love,
When conscience sinks beneath its load,
That bids our guilty fears remove,
And point to Christ's atoning blood.
Oh! then 't is sweet indeed to know,
God can be just and gracious too!

Sweet is the peace that Jesus gives,
When all around is dressed in gloom;
'T is sweet to know the Saviour lives,
When friends are hurried to the tomb;
And those we love are snatch'd away,
Like flowers that wither in a day.

And oh, 't is sweet when we begin,
To find this earthly house give way,
To feel a principle within,
Rising superior to decay!
A hope implanted in the breast,
Bright foretaste of eternal rest!

But to behold Immanuel's face,
From sin and sorrow to be freed,
To dwell in his divine embrace,
This will be sweeter far indeed;
The fairest form of earthly bliss
Is less than nought compared with this,

And yet, through free and sovereign grace,
I hope ere long these joys to share;
Before the throne" to find a place,
That bright unfading crown to wear;
And join the ransom'd choir above,
To celebrate redeeming love.

ANONYMOUS.

DIRGE.

BE still! be still! let not a breath
Disturb the solemn hour of death.
Now let the spirit part in peace:
For lo! the vital motions cease:
The quivering limbs are now at rest:
And now no struggle heaves the toiling breast.

O what an awful, awful hour!
And how tremendous is the power
That desolates the human frame;
Extinguishes the living flame;
The pulses of the panting heart
Arrests, and bids the weary spirit part!

Ye kindred spirits of the dead,
Whither, O whither are ye fled?
Now disengaged from earthly care,
Tell me how fare ye: tell me where
Ye sojourn: for I long to know
If your awarded doom be weal or woe.

But whatsoe'er thy lot may be,
Poor parted spirit! ne'er can we
Forget thy love in word and deed
That makes the heart of friendship bleed;
And makes me long, yet fear, to know
If thy awarded doom be weal or woe.

Here both the master and the slave
Lie without difference in the grave;
But, while they moulder in the tomb,
O who can say what different doom
May th' inmate of their dust await!
Or what betides their disembodied state.

No former wealth or rank can now
Distinguish between high and low:
And none can succour your distress,
O man, if proud and pitiless
In life, from your abundant store
You never succour'd or relieved the poor.

But if your pious bounty fed
The hungry, and the naked clad;
If e'er your sympathy beguiled
The sorrows of an orphan child,
Or soothed the widow's lonely grief;
Or to the woe-worn stranger dealt relief—

They on your unembodied state
Will in the time of trouble wait;
Your hour of awful peril know,
And shield you from the shafts of woe:
They will unclasp the book of gold,
And your recorded deeds of love unfold.

PROFESSOR RICHARDSON.

A FATHER'S EXTEMPORE CONSOLATION, &c.

LET vulgar souls endure the body's chain,
Till life's dull current ebbs in every vein,
Dream out a tedious age ere, wide display'd,
Death's blackest pinion wraps them in the shade:

These happy infants, early taught to shun
All that the world admires beneath the sun,

Scorn'd the weak bands mortality could tie,
And fled impatient to their native sky.

Dear precious babes !—alas ! when, fondly wild,
A mother's heart hung melting o'er her child,
When my charm'd eye a flood of joy express'd,
And all the father kindled in my breast,
A sudden paleness seized each guiltless face,
And death, though smiling, crept o'er every grace.

Nature ! be calm—heave not the impassion'd sigh,
Nor teach one tear to tremble in my eye.
A few unspotted moments pass'd between
Their dawn of being and their closing scene:
And sure no nobler blessing can be given,
When one short anguish is the price of heaven.

CAWTHORN.

ACTIVE DUTIES AFFORD RELIEF TO SORROW.

In my judgment, one of the best proofs that sorrow has had its right effect on the mind is, that it has not incapacitated you for business;—*your* business being duties. I well know that under the pressure of heavy affliction it is more soothing to the heart to sink down into the enjoyment of a kind of sad indulgence, and to make itself believe that this is as right as it is gratifying; especially while it mixes some pious thoughts with this unprofitable tranquillity. But who can say, even after the severest loss, I have no duties, no cares, in life remaining. Much less can a tender mother say it, who has still so many looking to her advice, and what is almost more, to her example. It is not the smallest part of the good that you may do them, to let them see what effect great trials have upon your mind, and that christianity enables

you to bear up against such a stroke. It is an excellent sign that after the cares and labours of the day you can return to your pious exercises and meditations with undiminished attention. This will be a good criterion by which to judge of your state.—*Letter from Hannah More to Lady Waldegrave.*

ON THE DEATH OF VISCOUNTESS TOWNSHEND.

With downcast look and pitying eye,
Unarm'd the King of Terrors stood;
He laid his sting and horrors by,
Averse to strike the fair and good:

When thus an angel urged the blow—
'No more thy lifted hand suspend!
To conscious guilt a dreaded foe,
To innocence a welcome friend.

'Bright hosts of cherubs round her stand,
To her and me confess'd alone;
Each waving his celestial hand,
And pointing to th' eternal throne.'

The angel spoke—nor husband dear,
Nor children loved, (a mournful train,)
Could from her eye attract one tear,
Nor bend one thought to earth again.

The soul, impatient of delay,
No more could mortal fetters bind;
But, springing to the realms of day,
Leaves every human care behind.

Yet, oh! an infant daughter's claim
Demands from heaven thy guardian care;
Protect that lovely, helpless frame!
And guard that breast you form'd so fair!

A parent's loss, unknown, unwept,
Thoughtless the fatal hour she pass'd;
Or only thought her mother slept,
Nor knew how long that sleep must last.

When time th' unfolding mind displays,
May she, by thy example led,
Fly from that motley, giddy maze
Which youth, and guilt, and folly tread.

These never knew the guiding hand
Which leads to virtue's arduous way:
Mothers now join the vagrant band,
And teach their children how to stray.

Her shall the pious task engage
(Such once was thine), with lenient aid,
A father's sorrows to assuage,
His love with equal love repaid.

So shall she read with ardent eye
This lesson thy last moments give,—
'They who, like thee, would fearless die,'
Spotless, like thee, must learn to live.'

EARL NUGENT.

ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF MRS. SARAH MORE, SISTER OF THE CELEBRATED MRS. H. MORE.

IN the spring of 1817, by the death of Mrs. Sarah More, the eldest of the then surviving sisters the family was again stricken. A companion was taken from them whose lively sallies of original wit had often made sorrow smile, and pain forget itself. But it was the lot of this intelligent, virtuous, and entertaining person to linger long in an extremity of suffering rarely surpassed. Her viva-

city combated long with her pains, but her victory over them was the reward of her patient hope in her Redeemer, her disclaimer of all self-righteous grounds of consolation, and her humble trust in the purchased pardon of her God. Her bed of death was the scene of awful edification,—the voice of ecstasy mingling with the cry of anguish —the flesh dissolving in pain, and the spirit departing in peace. She had, indeed, an earthly stay in Hannah, who let none of the supports or pledges of Scripture-testimony be wanting to her dying sister, while hers was the hand to do all that could be done by human help to mitigate the last crisis.

The Christian magnanimity by which the departure of this valuable person was distinguished, has been recorded by a friend who was constantly in her chamber during her last sickness. The particulars are very affecting, and will interest a large proportion of the readers of this work. It is an episode, however, which those who turn aside from scenes of patient suffering may easily pass over, though it is but honest to tell them that the more they strive to put away these thoughts to a more convenient season, the more terrific will be the form in which, in the end, they will be sure to present themselves.

"The last hours of our dear friend Mrs. S. More, afforded so wonderful a manifestation of the mercy and faithfulness of God, and of the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, that I have felt it a solemn duty to set down as many of the particulars (too many have escaped) as I can recollect, both for my own edification, and for the consolation of those friends who are more peculiarly interested in this display of the power and goodness of the Lord.

"From a very slight indication which appeared

about six months before her departure, she was able to anticipate the whole progress and fatal termination of her disorder, which she explained to a confidential servant with a composure and an acquiescence in the Divine will which were truly admirable, and which never for a moment forsook her; adding, at the same time, that not an hour of any day passed in which she did not inwardly send up that supplication of the Litany, 'In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord, deliver me.' It was a considerable time after the wound broke out in her leg, and began to wear a threatening appearance, before she permitted a groan, or any strong expression of suffering, to escape her; and when at length they were extorted by agony, she seemed to reproach herself for them, as implying a departure from that submission and acquiescence for which she daily and earnestly prayed. At one time, when she was sitting in the parlour under very sharp suffering, one of her sisters exclaimed, 'Poor Sally! you are in dreadful pain.' She answered, "I am indeed, but it is all well.' She still, for some time longer, continued to enjoy the society of her friends, who were often deceived by the playfulness of her conversation, and the placidity of her manner, into the belief that the sad accounts which had been given of her situation were the exaggerations of affectionate alarm.

"While still so well as to be able in some degree to pursue her usual sedentary employments, she gave a striking proof how entirely she was withdrawing her mind from the things of this world, by refusing to have her chair placed near the bow-window, from whence she could enjoy the sight of those plants and flowers which it had been her

constant amusement and delight to cultivate, but from which she now turned with an expression of the completest indifference.

"At length it became impossible for her any longer to support a sitting position, and just before she was assisted up stairs for the last time, she threw a look all around her, evidently taking a mental farewell of the scene to which she had been so long accustomed, with a look which, though she uttered no word, was full of solemn meaning. The extremity and constancy of her sufferings at length deprived her of the power of attending to a chain of reading which had hitherto been her chief delight and solace. To supply in some measure this loss, her sisters used to repeat from time to time a few detached texts, in which she would constantly join with the greatest fervour. During the last two years of her life, more especially, she had been so diligent and constant a reader of the Scriptures, as well as of other devotional books, that her mind had become completely imbued with them; and it was very remarkable, that in the moments of her sharpest pain, her attention was instantly excited, and her mind visibly comforted, if any bystander recited a verse from the Scriptures, or a short prayer, in which, even when unable to speak, she joined with deep fervour.

"One day, after she had lain for some time in an almost insensible state, a friend tried her with a few texts of Scripture; she suddenly burst forth, 'Can any thing be finer than that? it quite makes one's face shine!' Towards the latter part of her illness, she asked one day to have a little girl in whom she was interested, brought to her. She could only deliver herself in short sentences, but her words were 'God bless thee, my dear child;

love God; serve God; love to pray to God more than to do any other thing.' One night she complained of too much light, adding that 'the smallest light was enough to die by.' Mrs. H. More asked her if she had comfort in her mind. 'Yes,' she replied, 'I have no uncomfort at all.' She was then asked if she knew some friend that was in the room. 'Oh! yes,' she answered, 'I know everybody, and remember every thing.'—'Ah, poor dear soul,' said one of her attendants, 'she remembers her sufferings too!'—'No,' she answered, in a tone of the most affecting resignation, 'I do not think of them.' When she was supposed to be very near her last hour, on her medical attendant's wishing her a good morning, she raised her hands in a holy transport, exclaiming, 'Oh, for the glorious morning of the resurrection!—but there are some gray clouds between!' She then blessed him and all his family, and exhorted him to love God, and to take care of his soul. 'Oh,' she exclaimed, 'if this should be the blessed hour of my deliverance, may I die the death of the righteous, and may my last thoughts be thoughts of faithfulness!' The following day she awoke suddenly out of a tranquil sleep, crying out in a rapture, 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto the Lamb,—Hallelujah!' Another morning, when she was imagined to be in the very act of dying, recovering herself a little, she murmured out, 'When shall I come to these things—grace—mercy—peace!' She then asked for a little cold water, and turning her head towards a nurse who was attending her, 'Do you know who it was that said, A cup of cold water given in my name?'

"Again, in the intervals between her wanderings, and the extremity of pain, she exclaimed incea-

santly, 'Oh, the blood of Christ! He died for me! God was man! May his blood be shed on me! Lord, let the light of thy countenance shine upon me. When shall I appear before God?' And then half bewildered again, she cried out earnestly to her sister, 'Patty, *do* love the blessed God. Lord, shield me with the wings of thy love.' After a little interval, she said to Mrs. H. More, 'I hope I have had all my stripes; Lord! I am ready, finish the work!' On awaking in the afternoon, she again poured forth this ejaculation,—'Lord, look down upon me with the light of thy salvation; let thy Holy Spirit shine upon me. Look, O Lord! upon thy afflicted servant.' Somebody present saying to her, 'The Lord will release you, and take you out of your pain,' she seemed to fear lest she had betrayed some impatience, and immediately answered, 'Ay, in his own good time.' She then broke out into the Gloria Patri, and added, 'Lord, look down upon a poor penitent, humble, contrite sinner.'

"Nearly three days now passed, either in strong delirium or total stupor, at the end of which she became more composed, and, as at every other time, uttered no sentence in which supplication or praise was not mingled. Her chief cry on this day was for pardon and sanctification, and she charged her sisters to strive for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Her wanderings were frequent, but whether sensible or incoherent, calm or agitated, still the names of her God and her Saviour were constantly on her tongue.

"Her sister asked her if she knew her; she answered, 'I know nobody but Christ.' In the evening of her last day but one, though scarcely able to articulate, she murmured out to those who stood

around her, 'Talk of the cross—the precious cross —the King of love.' On the very morning of her blessed and quiet release from an earthly existence, though no longer able to swallow food, or discern any outward object, she was still enabled to give an evidence of the heavenly frame of her mind; a friend repeating to her that heart-sustaining assurance, 'The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin,' she pronounced with a devout motion of her hands and eyes, 'cleanseth,' and a moment after, 'Blessed Jesus!' and these were the last of her words that could be recollected. It is scarcely necessary to repeat, after such a relation, that her whole conduct, during her conflict with this last enemy, was one uniform and uninterrupted display (when she was in possession of her faculties) of those fruits of the Spirit enumerated by the apostle, 'Love, peace, meekness, long-suffering, faith:' —and it only remains for us to pray that our latter end may be like hers."

WM. ROBERTS.

TO THE MEMORY OF A VERY PROMISING CHILD,

WRITTEN AFTER WITNESSING HER LAST MOMENTS.

I CANNOT weep, yet I can feel
The pangs that rend a parent's breast;
But, ah! what sighs or tears can heal
Thy griefs, and wake the slumb'rer's rest?

What art thou, spirit undefined,
That passest with man's breath away,
That giv'st him feeling, sense, and mind,
And leav'st him cold, unconscious clay?

A moment gone, I look'd, and, lo!
Sensation throbb'd through all her frame
Those beamless eyes were raised in woe;
That bosom's motion went and came.

The next, a nameless change was wrought,
Death nipt in twain life's brittle thread,
And, in a twinkling, feeling, thought,
Sensation, motion—all were fled!

Those lips will never more repeat
The welcome lesson conn'd with care;
Or breathe at even, in accents sweet,
To Heaven the well-remember'd prayer!

Those little hands shall ne'er essay
To ply the mimic task again,
Well pleased, forgetting mirth and play,
A mother's promised gift to gain!

That heart is still—no more to move,
That cheek is wan—no more to bloom,
Or dimple in the smile of love,
That speaks a parent's welcome home.

And thou, with years and suff'rings bow'd
Say, dost thou least this loss deplore?
Ah! though thy wailings are not loud,
I fear thy secret grief is more.

Youth's griefs are loud, but are not long;
But thine with life itself shall last;
And age will feel each sorrow strong,
When all its morning-joys are past.

'T was thine her infant mind to mould,
And leave the copy all thou art;
And sure the wide world does not hold
A warmer or a purer heart!

I cannot weep, yet I can feel
The pangs that rend a parent's breast;
But ah! what sorrowing can unseal
Those eyes, and wake the slumb'rer's rest?

M'DIARMID.

ON THE BEST PREPARATION FOR AFFLICTIONS.

In the day of *prosperity* be JOYFUL; but in the day of *adversity*, CONSIDER.—Eccles. vii. 14.

IT is the great folly of most men, especially when they are in prosperous circumstances, that they cannot suppose or imagine the possibility of a change in their affairs or conditions. A living man can hardly think of dying; a healthy man can hardly think of sickness; a wealthy man can hardly think of poverty; a man who is in full possession of the applause and glory of the world, can hardly think of being exposed to calumny, reproach, and disgrace. Since, however, both Scripture and experience attest, that the most sincere piety and integrity cannot confer any exemption from afflictions, it becomes the serious concern of all, to be prepared for that, which, in some form or other, must sooner or later necessarily be our portion. The following considerations, therefore, are offered as a PREPARATIVE against afflictions, before they are permitted to overtake us.

I. "*In the day of prosperity,*" *frequently contemplate the possibility of a change of circumstances, and expect afflictions before they come.*

The very state of the world is uncertain and

unstable, and for the most part stormy and troublesome. If there be some intervals of tranquillity, or of health and prosperity, they are commonly followed by longer periods of unquietness and trouble, of sorrow, sickness, and adversity; and the greatest impressions are then made by them, when they surprise us, and come unexpectedly. When the mind is prepared for them by a kind of anticipation, it abates the edge, and keenness, and sharpness of them. This pre-apprehension and anticipation of troubles and difficulties is the mother of prevention, where it is possible; and where it is not possible, yet it is the mother of patience and resolution when they actually arrive. The venerable martyr BILNEY, when the true profession of the gospel in England was under papal persecution, was accustomed, before he suffered, to put his finger into the flame of a candle, in order to habituate himself to the patient endurance of his impending martyrdom at the stake: which he at length suffered, with singular resolution, patience, faith, and charity.

Men are apt to feed their fancies with the anticipation of what they hope for and wish in this world, and to possess it in imagination, before they attain it in fruition. But, if they would have the patience sometimes to anticipate what they have just cause to fear, and to put themselves under a pre-apprehension of it, in relation to crosses and troubles, it would make them WISE, and teach them a lesson of patience and moderation, before they have occasion to use it: so that they need not then begin to learn it, when the present and incumbent pressure renders the lesson more difficult. This was the method our blessed LORD took with his disciples,—frequently to tell them beforehand what

sufferings they must expect in the world; in order that they might be prepared to entertain them with resolution and patience.

II. *In the time of our prosperity, let us make it our care to maintain a conscience void of offence, before the approach of troubles and afflictions.*

As *sin* (and a consciousness of its guilt) *is the sting of death;* so is it the very sting and venom of all crosses and afflictions. This is that which imparts the greatest bitterness and strength to afflictions; as it not only weakens and disables the spirit of a man, but also obstructs the intercourse between God and the soul, and fails not to bring all former sins to remembrance.

When Joseph's brethren were in a great strait in Egypt, under the threatenings and *seeming* jealousy of their unknown brother, then the remembrance of their injury to their defenceless brother, presented itself to their guilty minds with every possible aggravation. Conscience, which had been silenced for more than twenty years, then stepped forth, and gave them the necessary information respecting their former unrepented crime. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when *he* besought *us*, and *we* would NOT hear. THEREFORE is this distress come upon us." (Gen. xlii. 21.) "A wounded spirit who CAN bear?" (Prov. xviii. 14.)

On the other hand, integrity and a good conscience sustain the mind and spirit of a man amidst all the storms of the world. If thou meanest, therefore, to make affliction easy, keep thy conscience clear before it comes. Thou hast THEN the strength of thine own soul to support thee, and liberty of access to the most Mighty and Gracious

God to deliver thee, WHEN thou canst, in the sincerity of thine heart, with Hezekiah, appeal unto God:—"Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." (Isa. xxxviii. 3.) And this access to Almighty God imparts new supplies, succour, and strength to the soul, to bear it up under very great and pressing afflictions. If, therefore, either before the access or irruption of troubles, or under their pressure, any thing or person in the world solicit thee to ease or deliver thyself by a breach or wound of thy conscience: know, that they are about to cheat thee of thy best security, under God, against the power or malignity of troubles: they are about to clip off that lock, in which, under God, thy strength lieth. Whatever, therefore, thou dost hazard or lose, keep the integrity of thy conscience, both before the approach of troubles and under them. It is a jewel, that will make thee rich in the midst of poverty; a sun, that will give thee light in the midst of darkness; a fortress, that will keep thee safe in the greatest danger, and which is never to be taken, unless thou thyself betray it and deliver it up.

But if thy heart hath proved deceitful to thee, and thou hast fallen into any sin, there yet remains one expedient to stop and anticipate the malignity of it from mingling with thy affliction. Therefore,

III. *Before afflictions come, be sure thou break off thy sin, by sincere and hearty repentance.*

He that, before the severity of affliction comes upon him, hath his heart cleansed from the guilt of sin by repentance, whereby he forsakes the love and practice of all sin, and by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart unto righteous-

ness,—hath and will have but one work to do, viz. to fit himself with patience to undergo the shock of affliction: but whosoever defers his repentance until *driven* to it by affliction, his work is more difficult, because he has both to begin his repentance, and to bear his affliction.

Lest the malignity of sin should remain in thy soul, when affliction overtakes thee, be careful that thy repentance be frequent: to which end, let thy examinations of thy heart and thy life be strict and daily. When guilt and affliction come upon a man together, they add to each other weight and difficulty of removal. But affliction meeting with a conscience cleansed by faith and repentance, is always tolerable, and for the most part comfortable. It loses its nature, and becomes another thing: it is a preventive of sin, a corrective of corruptions, an exercise of grace, a conformity to Christ, an assurance of God's love, a preparative for heaven, rather than an affliction.

IV. *Above all things be very careful that thy affliction be not the just production of thy sin or folly.*

For in the one case thou sufferest as an evil-doer; in the other, thou sufferest as a fool: and in neither canst thou take any comfort. If thou sufferest without any fault, or for thy virtue, piety, or goodness, thou needest not be troubled for the one, and thou mayest most justly rejoice in the other. But when a man suffers as an *evil-doer*, or as a busy-body in other men's matters, or *for ill language or passionate words*, for DISTURBANCE OF THE CIVIL POWER, or for any other sinful or unjustifiable action, his sufferings lose the name of afflictions, and become formally and in their own nature punishments. And in such a kind of suffering, thoug

sometimes the goodness and wisdom of God may bring good out of it to him that suffers; yet in such sufferings a man does not only undergo temporal loss, pain, and inconvenience, but he has the inevitable prospect of his fault and offence in them, which makes the suffering the more bitter and distasteful.

V. *Be careful to bring thyself to a right estimate of the world, and of the good or evil of it.*

We set too great a value upon our health, our wealth, or our reputation. And it is this overvaluation of what at the best are but fleeting and uncertain external good things, which renders us unable to bear the loss of them, patiently and meekly, by sickness, poverty, calumny, or reproach; and which further makes us fear death, not only as the ruin of nature, but as that which puts a period to all our comforts. Whereas, had we but faith enough to believe the truths of the gospel concerning our future happiness, it would make us not DESIRE death, because we might in the time of this life secure to ourselves the great and *one thing needful;* and it would make us not FEAR death, because we see a greater fruition to be enjoyed after it, than all the glory of this present world can yield.

VI. *The next preparative against affliction is to obtain a humble mind.*

When affliction meets a proud heart, full of opinion of its own worth and goodness, there arise more trouble and tumult, more disorder and discomposure in the contest of such a heart against the affliction, than possibly can arise from the affliction itself. The struggling of pride with the affliction galls and entangles the mind more than the severest affliction, and renders a man very un-

fit for it, and very unable to bear it. Whereas a humble, lowly mind is calm and patient, and falls with ease upon an afflicted condition; it being rightly prepared to receive the shock of any affliction, for such a mind is already as low as affliction can ordinarily reduce it.

VII. *But, yet further,* GAIN ASSURANCE OF THY PEACE WITH GOD, *through Jesus Christ our Lord and consequently of thy future happiness, and be frequent in the contemplation and improvement of it.*

This divine peace, which is attainable only by the saving knowledge of Christ, who brought life and immortality to light, is the great means by which a man obtains victory over the world, and is enabled to enjoy prosperity with moderation, and to undergo affliction with patience. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John v. 4.) When this blessed peace is once attained, thou art set above the love of the world and the fear of afflictions, because thou hast the assurance of a greater treasure than this world can either give or take away: "a kingdom that cannot be moved." (Heb. xii. 28.); a hope and most assured expectation of immortality, which is far above the region of afflictions, and which (while it makes the best things of this world in their best appearance and dress but light and vain, and empty and nothing,) makes the worst things that the world and mortality can inflict or suffer, light and easy. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are tem-

poral; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.)

The preceding considerations are some of those preparations which, with the divine grace and blessing, will fit us to meet with afflictions: and in them these two things are to be remembered, viz:—

1. That we do not content ourselves with merely speculative notions, but *practically digest* the foregoing considerations *into our hearts* and resolutions: for, if they be but notional only, afflictions, when they do come, will easily defeat these notions. It is possible for men to have excellent theories to support themselves in afflictions, and to apply them to others in that condition, with singular dexterity and advantage: yet, when the case comes to be their own, their spirits sink within them, because these theories oftentimes float on the understanding, but are not deeply and practically digested in the heart.

2. Whatever you do, acquire this habit and temper of mind:—Exercise your faith; get your peace and assurance settled before sickness comes: for a man, in any other kind of suffering, may possibly learn them, because his mind is, or may be, in its entire strength. But, most certainly, sickness is an ill season, in which to begin learning these contemplations, unless they are acquired before the distempers of the body discompose the mind, and render it unfit to begin to learn. Sickness is a time when that which has been previously laid up in store in the soul, must be drawn out and exercised: but it will be a most difficult business then to commence that lesson which should be learned in health, though it be practised in sickness.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE FROM BISHOP HEBER TO MISS STOWE.

Furreedpoor, July, 1824.

WITH a heavy heart, my dear Miss Stowe, I send you the enclosed keys. How to offer you consolation in your present grief, I know not; for by my own deep sense of the loss of an excellent friend, I know how much heavier is your burden. Yet even the many amiable qualities of your dear brother, joined with that deep Christian humility and reliance on his Saviour which he evinced in his illness, while they make our loss the heavier, should lead us to recollect that the loss is ours only; that, prepared as he was to die, it was his unspeakable gain to be removed from a world in which he had many sorrows; and above all, that your separation from him will only be for a time, and until *He* who has hidden him from your eyes shall restore you to his society in a happy and eternal state of existence. Separation of one kind or another is, indeed, one of the most frequent trials to which affectionate hearts are exposed. And if you can only regard your brother as removed for his own advantage to a distant country, you will find, perhaps, some of that misery alleviated under which you are now suffering. Had you remained in England when he came out hither, you would have been, for a time, divided no less effectually than you are now. The difference of hearing from him is almost all, and though you now have not that comfort, yet even without hearing from him, you may be well persuaded, (which there you could not always have been,) that he is well and happy; and, above all, you may be persuaded, as your dear

brother was most fully in his time of severest suffering, that God never smites his children in vain, or out of cruelty. His severest stripes are intended to heal, and he has, doubtless, some wise and gracious purpose both for your poor Martin and for you, in thus taking him from your side, and leaving you in this world, with *Himself* as your sole guardian.

A mighty and most merciful Protector, be sure He is, and one who always then deals most kindly with us when we are constrained to cast our cares on Him alone, and are most sensible of our utter helplessness. This was your brother's comfort—it should be yours; and thus may both he and you have occasion for unspeakable joy hereafter, if the mysterious dispensation which has deprived you of your *brother*, serves to bring you to a closer and more constant communion with your *God*. Meantime, in my wife and myself, you have friends, even in this remote land, who are anxious, as far as we have the power, to supply your brother's place, and whose best services you may command as freely as his whom you have lost.

THE GRAVE OF HOWARD.

Spirit of Death! whose outstretch'd pennons dread
Wave o'er the world beneath their shadow spread,
Who darkly speedest on thy destined way,
'Mid shrieks and cries, and sounds of dire dismay.
Spirit! behold thy victory—assume
A form more terrible, an ampler plume;
For he, who wander'd o'er the world alone,
Listening to Misery's universal moan;

He who, sustain'd by Virtue's arm sublime,
Tended the sick and poor from clime to clime,
Low in the dust is laid—thy noblest spoil!
And Mercy ceases from her awful toil!

'Twas where the pestilence at thy command
Arose to desolate the sickening land,
When many a mingled cry and dying prayer
Resounded to the listening midnight air,
When deep dismay heard not the frequent knell,
And the wan carcase fester'd as it fell;

'T was there, with holy Virtue's awful mien,
Amid the sad sights of that fearful scene,
Calm he was found: the dews of death he dried,
He spoke of comfort to the poor that cried;
He watch'd the fading eye, the flagging breath,
Ere yet the languid sense was lost in death;
And, with that look protecting angels wear,
Hung o'er the dismal couch of pale despair!

Friend of mankind! thy righteous task is o'er;
The heart that throbb'd with pity, beats no more.

Around the limits of this rolling sphere,
Whene'er the just and good thy tale shall hear,
A tear shall fall; alone, amidst the gloom
Of the still dungeon, his long sorrow's tomb,
The captive, mourning o'er his chain, shall bend
To think the cold earth hides his only friend!—
He who with labour draws his wasting breath
On the forsaken silent bed of death,
Remembering thy last look and anxious eye,
Shall gaze around, unvisited, and die.

Friend of mankind, farewell! these tears we shed,
So nature dictates, o'er thy earthly bed;
Yet we forget not it was His high will,
Who saw thee virtue's arduous task fulfil,

Thy spirit from its toil at last should rest;
So wills thy God, and what He wills is best!

Thou hast encounter'd dark disease's train,
Thou hast conversed with poverty and pain,
Thou hast beheld the dreariest forms of woe
That through this mournful vale unfriended go;
And pale with sympathy hast paused to hear
The saddest plaints e'er told to human ear.
Go, then, the task fulfill'd, the trial o'er,
Where sickness, want, and pain are known no more!

How awful did thy lonely track appear,
Enlightening misery's benighted sphere!

As when an angel all serene goes forth
To still the raging tempest of the north,
Th' embattled clouds that hid the struggling day
Slow from his face retire in dark array;
On the black waves, like promontories hung,
A light, as of the orient morn, is flung,
Till blue and level heaves the silent brine,
And the new lighted rocks at distance shine:
E'en so didst thou go forth with cheering eye—
Before thy looks the shades of misery fly;
So didst thou hush the tempest, stilling wide
Of human woe the loud lamenting tide.

Nor shall the spirit of those deeds expire,
As fades the feeble spark of vital fire,
But beam abroad, and cheer with lustre mild
Humanity's remotest prospects wild,
Till this frail orb shall from its sphere be hurl'd,
Till final ruin hush the murmuring world,
And all its sorrows, at the awful blast
Of th' archangel's trump, be but as shadows past!

Relentless Time, that steals with silent tread,
Shall tear away the trophies of the dead;

Fame, on the pyramid's aspiring top,
With sighs shall her recording trumpet drop;
The feeble characters of Glory's hand
Shall perish, like the tracks upon the sand;
But not with these expire the sacred flame
Of virtue, or the good man's awful name.

Howard! it matters not that far away
From Albion's peaceful shore thy bones decay.
Him it might please, by whose sustaining hand
Thy steps were led through many a distant land,
Thy long and last abode should there be found,
Where many a savage nation prowls around;
That Virtue from the hallow'd spot might rise,
And, pointing to the finish'd sacrifice,
Teach to the roving Tartar's savage clan
Lessons of love, and higher aims of man.
The hoary chieftain, who thy tale shall hear,
Pale on thy grave shall drop his faltering spear;
The cold, unpitying Cossack thirst no more
To bathe his burning falchion deep in gore,
Relentless to the cry of carnage speed,
Or urge o'er gasping heaps his panting steed!

Nor vain the thought that fairer hence may rise
New views of life and wider charities.
Far from the bleak Riphean mountains hoar,
From the cold Don, or Wolga's wandering shore,
From many a shady forest's lengthening tract,
From many a dark descending cataract,
Succeeding tribes shall come, and, o'er the place
Where sleeps the general friend of human race,
Instruct their children what a debt they owe,
Speak of the man who trod the paths of woe;
Then bid them to their native woods depart,
With new-born virtue aching at their heart.

When o'er the sounding Euxine's stormy tides
In hostile pomp the Turk's proud navy rides,

Bent on the frontiers of th' imperial Czar,
To pour the tempest of vindictive war;
If onward to those shores they haply steer
Where, Howard, thy cold dust reposes near,
Whilst o'er the wave the silken pennants stream,
And seen far off the golden crescents gleam,
Amid the pomp of war the swelling breast
Shall feel a still unwonted awe impress'd,
And the relenting Pagan turn aside
To think—on yonder shore the Christian died!
But thou, O Briton, doom'd perhaps to roam
An exile many a year, and far from home,
If ever fortune thy lone footsteps leads
To the wild Nieper's banks and whispering reeds,
O'er Howard's grave thou shalt impassion'd bend,
As if to hold sad converse with a friend.
Whate'er thy fate upon this various scene,
Where'er thy weary pilgrimage has been,
There shalt thou pause; and, shutting from thy heart
Some vain regrets that oft unbidden start,
Think upon him, to every lot resign'd,
Who wept, who toil'd, who perish'd for mankind.
For me who musing, Howard, on thy fate,
These pensive strains at evening meditate,
I thank thee for the lessons thou hast taught
To mend my heart, or animate my thought.
I thank thee, Howard, for that awful view
Of life which thou hast drawn, most sad, most true.
Thou art no more! and the frail fading bloom
Of this poor offering dies upon thy tomb:
Beyond the transient sound of earthly praise
Thy virtues live, perhaps, in seraphs' lays!
I, borne in thought to the wild Nieper's wave,
Sigh to the reeds that whisper o'er thy grave.

BOWLES.

THE MOTHER'S DIRGE.

From bubbling streams, or springs that rise
In mountain grot or willowy vale,
Bring water, while I close these eyes,
And kiss these lips so cold and pale.
From tufted grove and shadowy glen,
Untrodden by the feet of men,
From sedgy banks and fragrant fields
Bring every flower that nature yields;
And scatter every breathing sweet
On loved Maria's winding-sheet.

Bless'd spirit, newly freed from pain,
While o'er thy faded cheek I bend,
Beloved and watch'd and wept in vain!
A moment more thy flight suspend.
Behold, while hovering on thy wing,
With water from the silver spring
I wash thy limbs, I spread thy bier;
And lay thee down with many a tear,
Clad in thy shroud of spotless white,
To slumber through thy weary night.

Thy tender smile, thy soothing voice,
Thy playful innocence no more
Thy fond, fond mother shall rejoice:
Thy little dreams of joy are o'er.
Of all the graces of thy mind,
No token wilt thou leave behind:
No trace of thee will soon remain,
But, in this breast a mother's pain,
A mossy grave, an humble stone,
To tell thy years and name unknown.

W. Carey.

FRIEND AFTER FRIEND DEPARTS.

Friend after friend departs:
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end.
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.

Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond the reign of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath;
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upwards and expire.

There is a world above
Where parting is unknown;
A long eternity of love,
Form'd for the good alone;
And faith beholds the dying here,
Translated to that glorious sphere.

Thus, star by star declines,
Till all are pass'd away;
As morning high and higher shines,
To pure and perfect day:
Nor sink the stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.

MONTGOMERY

THE USES OF AFFLICTION.

One end of God's sending afflictions upon men, is, to teach them humility and inspire a just sense of their own nothingness.

Every view we can take of the condition of man

demonstrates that there is no place for pride to be entertained. Derived from the dust, and returned to it again; his life short at best, and uncertain in its whole continuance; his knowledge limited, his power circumscribed; his faculties depraved, and his heart corrupted, what has he to be proud of? Yet what fruit of sin is more conspicuous in his fallen nature, than the workings of this corruption, in disregard of God, and insolent contempt of his fellow-creatures; in the swelling self-importance of prosperity, and the indignant rejection of adversity? *The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after* GOD, says the Psalmist; and to this, as to its main cause, may be traced the ungodliness of the prosperous, and those who flourish in the things of this world. To such, therefore, adversity is the only remedy—the only thing that can teach them the folly of their way, by striking away the prop on which they lean, and showing them practically how every way insufficient and insecure their dependence is; and thereby admonishing them to build on a better foundation. And not only to the profane and open despisers of religion, who set their hearts upon the world, are afflictions the only remedy that can reach their case with any reasonable hope of effect; but such is the deceitfulness of men's hearts, that even in those who are religiously disposed, and in those who make a profession of religion, a continued course of uninterrupted prosperity is apt to foster the pride that is forgetful of God—that hardens the heart and perverts the mind; against which evil God hath wisely appointed that mixture of blasted expectations and blighted prospects, which constitutes the afflictions of the present life, and is ordered and directed by his gracious Provi-

dence to bring men to a right sense of themselves, and of their dependence upon him; to humble their pride; to remind them of their own weakness and infirmity, and to put them upon a serious consideration of their true interests, as probationers for eternity. As it is the natural tendency of worldly success, and worldly delights, to blind the mind to spiritual things, and to increase the power of every corrupt propensity of our fallen nature; and as our gracious God is not willing that any should perish—affliction, in its various grades of disappointment, sorrow, suffering, pain, and sickness—is a necessary ingredient in the moral government of the world, and is, therefore, called in Scripture, the discipline and instruction of the Lord. But it is an instruction, which we must not only receive, but consider and apply, if we would profit by it; otherwise it serves only to stupify and harden, and, not unfrequently, to drive the rebellious sufferer into the deep impiety of charging God with cruelty and injustice. The pride that is not subdued by adversity—the spirit that is not broken by the rod of affliction—the heart that is not humbled under such admonition from the providence of God, must be left to its own devices, and be forsaken, and given over to work out that overwhelming load of never-ending misery and despair, from which it could neither be drawn by cords of love, nor be deterred by the infliction of suffering. Yet how transient, generally speaking, is the effect of this great moral weapon, upon the conduct of men! How like the early cloud and the morning dew are the humbling thoughts, and the good resolutions, and the thankful acknowledgments which the anguish of a sore bereavement, or the distress of a severe worldly loss, have

prompted and drawn in the hour of calamity! How quickly are the vows then made forgotten, and the respite then granted overlooked! Who cannot call to mind the instance in which this is true of himself? And must not then the stroke be repeated? If God hath not given us over to a reprobate mind, must not some severer blow from his hand be hanging over us? Yes, and there is but one way to avert it; and that is, to let past afflictions and present mercies now do their office, and humble us under the mighty hand which holds the issues of life and of death, and controls the changes and chances of this shifting world. Sure we may be, if we have faith only as a grain of mustard-seed, that whatever our heavenly Father sends us must be good for us. Let us, then, search for the good that is hidden under his chastenings, and we shall find it in that humble and lowly heart in which God delights to dwell; that resigned spirit to which he grants the consolations of heavenly comfort, and that holy hope which waits with patience, and endures with constancy those light afflictions, which are the bitter, but wholesome *admonition of the* LORD.

Another end of God's sending afflictions upon men, is, to lead them to repentance for their past sins.

Repentance is that state of mind, which is truly alive to the heinous nature of sin as an offence against God, and sincerely engaged to avoid the commission of it, and subdue its power over the corrupt and perverted faculties of a fallen nature. As such, it is that state of mind, that disposition of the soul, to which every person capable of reflection and conscious of sin should strive to bring himself; because it is the indispensable condition

of obtaining the favour of God and the promises of the gospel; for *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

When, therefore, we reflect on the usual consequences of worldly prosperity, or of over-engagement in those pursuits which lead to it, we must see at once that no condition can be more adverse to the entertainment of religious truth. When a wicked, that is, an irreligious man, prospers in all his worldly affairs, and his designs are followed with constant success; when he is able to gratify all his appetites, and to indulge himself in the enjoyment of ease and pleasure, or even to anticipate in his thoughts the time when this shall be in his power; it is no wonder he should forget God, and lean more and more upon himself. *Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?* said Nebuchadnezzar in the pride of his heart; and is not this the secret thought of many besides the Heathen king? In the intoxication of success, conscience is perverted or silenced in the worldly-minded man: the serious exhortations of religion, if he venture at all to hear them, are unheeded, while he says to his soul, *Thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Now in this condition—and it is that of many, of many too, who are neither great nor increased in goods, but whose hearts are glued down to the world—in this condition, what remedy can be applied but the rod only? The greatest blessing—the strongest proof of the mercy of God towards such persons is, the sending upon them some great affliction, some arresting and awakening judgment, which, like a severe medicine in a very dangerous distemper, may rouse them from their lethargy, may oblige them to consider, and thus lay

the foundation for repentance, and engage them in the care of their souls. This is the true purpose of every dealing of God with his creatures. His goodness as well as his severity is intended to lead men to repentance; nor is the latter ever resorted to until the former is disregarded. *God doth not willingly afflict the children of men;* but, like a tender father, reserves the rod as his strange work, as his wise and salutary appointment for their good.

If afflictions be thus fitted, when duly applied, to reclaim the sinner from the folly of his way, much more are they suited to convince good men of their failings, to make them more sensible of their errors, to bring them to a closer self-examination, and to a more perfect repentance and amendment. The very best of us, my brethren, are far, very far, from being what we should be, what we profess to be. Nay, we know not thoroughly what manner of spirit we are of, or what great imperfections lie hid in the mazes of our corrupt hearts; and it is by afflictions wisely ordered, that these are discovered, that they may be amended. Every serious Christian can say with David, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted;* and it is only when thus applied that afflictions are sanctified to us, and strength given from the Holy Spirit to bear up under them, and to derive comfort from them. A rebellious spirit under the chastening of affliction is like a wild beast caught in a net; he struggles and rages against the enclosure, but the affliction holds him fast, and becomes stronger; he bites the cords, but he sees not the mighty, though invisible hand which spread the net, nor yet the gracious purpose wherefore he is thus visited. Not so the Christian, he bends low before his

Father's displeasure. He feels the stroke, but he kisses the rod. He looks carefully for his offence; he amends it, and treasures up the correction against its repetition. Thus he can say with David, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.*

For this reason it is, that the afflictions and other sufferings God sends upon his people and servants, are declared in Scripture to be marks of his love and care towards them. *We are chastened of the Lord*, says St. Paul, *that we should not be condemned with the world;* and our Lord himself declares, *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.* In the very nature of things, afflictions cannot but be grievous and painful, when they are actually upon us; but the end they are intended to answer—the great advantage to be derived from them, by religious improvement—though it cannot, perhaps, bring us to desire them; yet it is amply sufficient to produce submission under them, thankfulness for them, and a diligent application of them to God's gracious purpose in sending them. And, as this is to be gathered from the particular circumstances of the case, we see in this the wisdom of the appointment. Affliction makes even the most thoughtless, serious; and it is in seasons of adversity, that the voice of conscience, unheeded in the hurry of business, and in the whirl of pleasure, is most likely to be listened to—to point to the very cause and occasion of the chastening, and to prompt to repentance and amended life.

Another end of God's afflicting men, is, to wean them from the love of this present evil world, and from dependence on its perishing delights.

The Scriptures are in nothing more earnest,

than in warning Christians against the dangerous influence which present and sensible things exert against the spirit and the power of religion. Being *contrary the one to the other*, the conflict is perpetual, nor can it be ended but by the victory of one. To reconcile them, and give to each what it claims, is impossible; and, in the attempt, millions have lost themselves for ever, and millions are yet willing to make the perilous adventure. *No man can serve two masters;* where one is present and visible, and the other, though not absent, is invisible; where one holds out his rewards to the senses and to present enjoyment, and the other offers chiefly what is future—far distant—unknown to sense, and discernible only by faith; the very attempt to serve both, is proof that the world is already preferred. Were there nothing, then, equally present and sensible with the enjoyments of the world—nothing to come practically in aid of faith, and remind us of our true, though invisible master—nothing to prove the promises of the one we have preferred false and deceitful—the corruption of nature would yet further prevail against the influence of religion, and the god of this world triumph, in the mastery of his temptations. But afflictions—thanks be to God—afflictions in all their various shapes, disappointments, losses, sufferings, sorrows from many sources—all come in aid of the truth of God, and of our immortal souls; and by stripping the mask from the promises of the world, by proving their inability either to arrest or repair the sorrow of the heart, bring deliverance from the snare of their enchantment.

We know, indeed, and we profess to believe that the promises of the world cannot be perma-

nent. We have seen them fail others, at their utmost need, and death will finally break the most sure possession of them. Yet all this is insufficient to overcome the delusion — experience only, can prove their emptiness; and suffering must teach the obstinate to build on a surer foundation. How many have cause to thank God that he hath thus dealt with them, and, by domestic affliction or worldly loss, opened their eyes to see, and their hearts to feel, that they were building on the sand and leaning on a broken reed? To how many has the hour of worldly calamity proved the season of reflection and returning to God? And to how many has continued adversity been the wholesome medicine that resisted the influence of the world, and proved the health of the soul? Well do we know, my brethren, that there is nothing more hurtful to the progress of religion than much engagement, even with the lawful business of life; insensibly almost, but too surely, it usurps the place of better things, and damps the ardour of the soul in its aspirations after God. It intrudes upon the time devoted to meditation and prayer, and distracts the thoughts in the exercise of devotion. The thorns and briars choke the seed; but God, in his mercy, sends some affliction, some loss, some startling providence, and the spell is broken — reflection succeeds — repentance brings forth its fruits, and greater watchfulness teaches *so to use this world, as not abusing it.* Thus do we perceive how the various disappointments, losses, and sufferings of the present life, work together in weaning us from the world, by proving its utter inability to secure to us its own promises — to comfort us under their privation, or to restore the breach which God hath made in their pos-

session. But it is a work to which we must be parties, my brethren, by serious consideration; by watchfulness and care, in following their wise direction; and by thankful submission to their salutary correction.

Another end of God's afflicting men, is, to try their faith—to improve their Christian graces, and perfect their souls for the presence of God.

As the improvement or abuse of the present life will form the basis of our future existence, it is only by trials suited to the various conditions of our being, that any discrimination of moral character can be made: and as the foundation of all religious reliance, and of all religious exertion, is faith, or unqualified dependence on the divine veracity; it is therefore consistent with, if, indeed, it is not inseparable from, a state of retribution, that this foundation should be exhibited by its proper superstructure of obedience and submission. To this the whole Christian system is adapted; and, as its sanctions are all invisible and future, Christians are said to *walk by faith and not by sight*. Now, whether they do thus walk, there are but two tests: one is, obedience to the divine command; the other is, submission to the divine will; and, in the union of both consists the perfection of our moral nature. But submission to the divine will can only be manifested in things contrary to our own will. Afflictions and privations therefore, are just as necessary to manifest our faith and reliance upon God, in submission to his holy will, as active obedience is, to manifest our actual subjection to his righteous government, as Sovereign of the universe.

Hence, we learn to estimate the mixed condition of the present life aright, to discern the gracious

purpose of those things which are grievous to flesh and blood, and to apply them to the increase and establishment of that faith for the trial of which they are appointed, and by the power of which only they can be supported. The Christian who has met the disappointment of his fondest earthly hope without repining—who has been smitten in the affection of his heart without murmuring—who has endured unjust reproach with patience, and pain and suffering with resignation, *looking to Jesus, the author and finishor of his faith*, presents a spectacle upon which heaven looks with approbation. His faith has overcome the world; and his *light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

RAVENSCROFT.

MARY.

THREE days before my Mary's death,
We walk'd by Grassmere shore;
'Sweet Lake!' she said, with faltering breath,
'I ne'er shall see thee more!'

Then, turning round her languid head,
She look'd me in the face;
And whisper'd, 'When thy friend is dead,
Remember this lone place.'

Vainly I struggled at a smile,
That did my fears betray;
It seem'd that on our darling isle
Foreboding darkness lay.

My Mary's words were words of truth;
None now behold the maid;
Amid the tears of age and youth
She in her grave was laid.

Long days, long nights, I ween were pass'd,
Ere ceased her funeral knell;
But to the spot I went at last
Where she had breathed 'farewell!'

Methought I saw the phantom stand
Beside the peaceful wave;
I felt the pressure of her hand—
Then look'd towards her grave.

Fair, fair beneath the evening sky
The quiet churchyard lay:
The tall pine grove most solemnly
Hung mute above her clay.

Dearly she loved their arching spread,
Their music wild and sweet,
And, as she wish'd on her death-bed,
Was buried at their feet.

Around her grave a beauteous fence
Of wild flowers shed their breath,
Smiling like infant innocence
Within the gloom of death.

Such flowers from bank of mountain brook
At eve we wont to bring,
When every little mossy nook
Betray'd returning spring.

Oft had I fix'd the simple wreath
Upon her virgin breast;
But now such flowers as form'd it breathe
Around her bed of rest.

Yet all within my silent soul,
As the hush'd air was calm;
The natural tears that slowly stole,
Assuaged my grief like balm.

The air that seem'd so thick and dull
For months unto my eye,
Ah me! how bright and beautiful
It floated on the sky!

A trance of high and solemn bliss
From purest ether came;
'Mid such a heavenly scene as this
Death is an empty name!

The memory of the past return'd
Like music to my heart,—
It seem'd that causelessly I mourn'd
When we were told to part.

'God's mercy,' to myself I said,
'To both our souls is given—
To me, sojourning on earth's shade,
To her—a saint in heaven!'

WILSON.

THE WIDOW.

AH! who is she that sits and weeps,
And gazes on the narrow mound?—
In that fresh grave her true love sleeps,
Her heart lies with him in the ground;
She heeds not, while her babe, at play,
Plucks the frail flowers that gaily bloom,
And casts them, as they fade away,
In garlands on its father's tomb:

—Unconscious where its father lies,
'Sweets to the sweet!' the prattler cries:
Ah! then she starts, looks up, her eyes o'erflow
With all a mother's love, and all a widow's woe.

Again she turns away her head,
Nor marks her infant's sportive air,
Its cherub cheeks all rosy red,
Its sweet blue eyes and yellow hair:
Silent she turns away her head,
Nor dare behold that happy face
Where smile the features of the dead
In lineaments of fairy grace:
In which at once, with transport wild,
She sees her husband and her child;
Ah! then her bosom burns, her eyes o'erflow
With all a mother's love, and all a widow's woe.

And still I find her sitting here,
Though dark October frowns on all;
And from the lime-trees rustling near
The scatter'd leaves around her fall:
O then it charms her inmost soul
It suits the sadness of her mind
To watch the clouds of autumn roll,
And listen to the evening wind;
In every shadow, every blast,
The spirits of enjoyments pass'd,
She sees, she hears;—ah! then her eyes o'erflow,
Not with a mother's love, but with a widow's woe.

The peasant dreads the driving storm,
Yet pauses as he hastens by,
Views the pale ruin of her form,
The desolation of her eye,

Beholds her babe for shelter creep
Behind the gravestone's dreary shade,
Where its father's wishes sleep,
And all its mother's hopes are laid;
Remembering then his own heart's joy,
A rosy wife, a blooming boy,
'O God!' he sighs, 'when I am thus laid low,
Must my poor partner feel a widow'd mother's woe!'

He gently stretches out his arm,
And calls the babe in accents mild;
The mother shrieks with strange alarm,
And snatches up her weeping child:
She thought that voice of tender tone,
Those accents soft, endearing, kind,
Came from beneath the hollow stone!
He marks the wandering of her mind,
And, musing on his happier lot,
Seeks the warm comforts of his cot.
He meets his wife;—ah! then his eyes o'erflow;
She feels a mother's love nor dreads a widow's woe!

The storm retires;—and hark! the bird,
The lonely bird of autumn's reign,
From yonder waving elm is heard;—
O what a wild and simple strain!
See the delighted mourner start
While robin redbreast's evening song
Pours all its sweetness through her heart,
And soothes her as it trills along:
Then gleams her eye; her fancy hears
The warbled music of the spheres;
She clasps her babe; she feels her bosom glow,
And in the mother's love forgets the widow's woe.

Go to thine home, forsaken fair!
Go to thy solitary home:
Thou lovely pilgrim! in despair
To thy saint's shrine no longer roam;
He rests not here;—thy soul's delight
Attends where'er thy footsteps tread;
He watches in the depths of night,
A guardian angel round thy bed,
And still a father, fondly kind,
Loves the dear pledge he left behind;
Behold that pledge!—then cease thy tears to flow,
And in the mother's love forget the widow's woe.

MONTGOMERY.

THE WIDOWER.

FROM the dwelling of the widower there breathed
a hollow moan,
To some one he seem'd talking, when I knew he
was alone:
I listen'd at the lattice of the chamber where he lay,
And, 'mid deep sobs of anguish, I plainly heard
him say—
'Thou livest in my bosom, love! though thou from
earth hast fled,
And on thy widow'd pillow shall no other lay her
head.'

Then sighs, that seem'd to rive his heart, his utter-
ance quite drown'd,
And on his knees, with vehemence, he dropp'd
upon the ground—
'Oh, give me strength, great God!' he cried, 'this
misery to bear;
Or, with the angel I have lost, take, take me to
your care:

For she within my bosom lives, though from my
presence fled,
And on her widow'd pillow shall no other lay her
head.

When I retire to sleepless rest, I go with thrilling
fears,
When weary I arise from bed, my eyes are dim
with tears;
I think of her whose faithful love my blessing was
and pride,
Who, day and night, for twice ten years, seem'd
safety by my side;
And still within my bosom lives, though from my
dwelling fled,
Nor on her widow'd pillow shall another lay her
head.

'Ah! must not such lost treasure to memory be
dear,
When e'en the place that held it is all that now
can cheer?
'T is sorrow's soothing nourishment to feed on
pleasures pass'd,
'T is true affection's covenant to live while life
shall last:
So live thou in my bosom, love! though thou to
heaven art fled,
For on thy widow'd pillow I alone will lay my
head.

T. PARR.

THE SOUL'S FAREWELL TO EARTH.

BE thou ever, O my soul, holily ambitious; always aspiring towards thy heaven; not entertaining any thought that makes not towards blessed-

ness. For this cause, therefore, put thyself upon thy wings, and leave the earth below thee; and, when thou art advanced above this inferior world, look down upon this globe of wretched mortality, and despise what thou wast and hadst; and think with thyself, "There was I, not a sojourner so much as prisoner, for some tedious years. There have I been thus long tugging with my miseries, with my sins. There have my treacherous senses betrayed me to infinite evils, both done and suffered. How have I been there tormented with the sense of others' wickedness, but more with the sense of my own! What insolence did I see in men of power! what rage in men of blood! what gross superstition in the ignorant! what abominable sacrilege in those that would be zealous! what drunken revellings, what filthiness, what hellish profanations, in atheistic ruffians! what perfidiousness in friendship, what cozenage in contracts! what cruelty in revenges; shortly, what a hell upon earth! Farewell then, sinful world, whose favours have been no other than snares, and whose frowns no less than torments. Farewell for ever; for if my flesh cannot yet clear itself of thee, yet my spirit shall ever know thee at a distance, and behold thee no otherwise than the escaped mariner looks back upon the rock, whereon he was lately splitted. Let thy bewitched clients adore thee for a deity; all the homage thou shalt receive from me shall be no other than defiance; and if thy glorious shows have deluded the eyes of credulous spectators, I know thee for an impostor. Deceive henceforth those that trust thee; for me, I am out of the reach of thy fraud, out of the power of thy malice."

Thus do thou, O my soul, when thou art raised

up to this height of thy fixed contemplation, cast down thine eyes contemptuously upon the region of thy former miseries, and be sure ever to keep up in a constant ascent towards blessedness, not suffering thyself to stoop any more to these earthly vanities. For tell me seriously, when the world was disposed to court thee most of all, what did it yield thee but unsound joys, sauced with a deep anguish of spirit; false hopes, shutting up in a heart-breaking disappointment; windy proffers, mocking thee with sudden retractions; bitter pills in sugar; poison in a golden cup? It showed thee perhaps stately palaces, but stuffed with cares; fair and populous cities, but full of toil and tumult; flourishing churches, but annoyed with schism and sacrilege; rich treasures, but kept by ill spirits; pleasing beauties, but baited with temptation; glorious titles, but surcharged with pride; goodly semblances, with rotten insides; in short, death, disguised with pleasure and profits.

If, therefore, heretofore, thy inexperience have suffered thy feathers to be belimed with these earthly entanglements, yet now that thou hast happily cast those plumes and quitted thyself of these miserable incumbrances, thou mayest soar aloft above the sphere of mortality, and be still towering up towards thy heaven: and as those who have ascended to the top of some Athos or Teneriffe, see all things below them, in the valleys, small, and scarcely in their diminution discernible; so shall all earthly objects, in thy spiritual exaltation, seem unto thee; either thou shalt not see them at all, or at least so lessened, that they have to thee quite lost all the proportion of their former dimensions.

It will not be long, O my soul, ere thou shalt

absolutely leave the world as the place of thy habitation, being carried up, by the blessed angels, to thy rest and glory; but, in the mean time, thou must resolve to leave it in thy thoughts and affections. Thou mayst have power over these, even before the hour of thy separation; and these, rightly disposed, have power to exempt thee beforehand, from the interests of this inferior world, and to advance thine approaches to that world of the blessed. While thou art confined to this clay, there is naturally a luggage of carnality that hangs heavy upon thee, and sways thee down to the earth; not suffering thee to mount upward to that bliss whereunto thou aspirest. This must be shaken off, if thou wouldst attain to any capacity of happiness. Even in this sense, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." It behoves thee to be, so far as this composition will admit, spiritualized, ere thou canst hope to attain to any degree of blessedness.

Thy conjunction with the body doth necessarily clog thee with an irrational part, which will unavoidably force upon thee some operation of its own; and thy senses will be interposing themselves in all thy intellectual employments, proffering thee the service of their guidance in all thy proceedings; but if thou lovest eternity of blessedness, shake them off as importunate suitors; gather up thyself into thy own regenerated powers, and do thy work without and above them. It is enough that thou hast, at first, taken some hint from them, of what concerns thee; (as for the rest, cast them off as unnecessary and impertinent) the prosecution whereof is too high and too internal, for them to intermeddle with. Thou hast now divine and heavenly things in chase, whereof there cannot be the

least scent in any of these earthly faculties. Divest therefore, what thou possibly mayest, of all materiality both of objects and apprehensions; and let thy pure, renewed, and illuminated intellect work only upon matter spiritual and celestial.

And, above all, propose unto thyself, and dwell upon that purest, most perfect, simplest, most blessed object, the glorious and incomprehensible Deity. There thou shalt find more than enough to take up thy thoughts to all eternity. Be thou, O my soul, ever swallowed up in the consideration of that infinite self-being Essence, whom all created spirits are not capable sufficiently to admire. Behold, and never cease wondering at, the majesty of his glory. The bodily eyes dazzle at the sight of the sun; but if there were as many suns as there are stars in the firmament of heaven, their united splendour were but darkness to their all-glorious Creator. Thou canst not yet hope to see him as he is; but, lo, thou beholdest where he dwells in light inaccessible; the sight of whose very outward verge is enough to put thee into a perpetual ecstasy. It is not for thee, as yet, to strive to enter within the vail: thine eyes may not be free, where the angels hide their faces. What thou wantest in sight, O my soul, supply in wonder. Never any mortal man, O God, durst sue to see thy face, save that one entire servant of thine, whose face thy conference had made shining and radiant; but even he, though inured to thy presence, was not capable to behold such glory, and live. Far be it from me, O Lord, to presume so high. Only let me see thee as thou hast bidden me, and but so; as not to behold thee, after thy gracious revelation, were my sin. Let me see,

even in this distance, some glimmering of thy divine power, wisdom, justice, mercy, truth, providence; and let me bless and adore thee, in what I see.

O the infiniteness of thine almighty *power*, which thou not hast, but art, beyond the possibility of all limitations of objects or thoughts. In us, poor finite creatures, our power comes short of our will. Many things we fain would do, but cannot; and great pity it were, that there should not be such a restraint upon our unruly appetites, which would otherwise work out the destruction both of others and ourselves. But, O God, thy power is beyond thy will. Thou canst do more than thou wilt. Thou couldst have made more worlds, when thou madest this one: and even this one which thou hast made, Lord, how glorious a one is it! Lo, there needs no other demonstration of thine omnipotence.

O what a heaven is this, which thou hast canopied over our heads! How immensely capacious! how admirably beautiful! how bestudded with goodly globes of light! some one whereof hath in it such unspeakable glory, that there have not wanted nations, and those not of the savagest, which have misworshipped it for their God. And if thou hadst made but one of these in thy firmament, thy workmanship had been above our wonder, for even this had surpassed the whole frame of this lower world. But now, as their quality strives with their greatness, so their magnitude strives with their number, which of them shall more magnify the praise of their almighty Creator. And these three are no less than matched by the constant regularity of the perpetual motion of

those mighty bodies; which having walked their daily rounds about the world above this five thousand six hundred and sixty years, yet are so ordered by thy inviolable decree, that they have not varied one inch from their appointed line, but still keep their due course and just distance each from other, although not fixed in any solid orb, but moving singly in a thin and yielding sky, to the very same point whence they set forth.

And if the bodily and visible part of thy heavenly host, O God, be thus inconceivably glorious, where shall we find room to wonder at those spiritual and living powers, which inhabit those celestial mansions, and attend upon the throne of thy majesty; the thousand thousands of thy blessed angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, thrones, principalities, dominions, which in thy presence enjoy a bliss next to infinite; any one of which, if we could see him, were enough to kill us with his glory? Not one of those millions of mighty spirits, but is able to destroy a world. O then, how infinitely transcendent is that power of thine, which hast both created all this heavenly hierarchy, and so movest in them, that only in and by thee they are thus potent!

Yea, Lord, let me but cast mine eyes down to this earth I tread upon, and view thy wonders in the deep, how manifestly do these proclaim thy divine omnipotence! When I see this vast globe of earth and waters, dreadfully hanging in the midst of a liquid air, upheld by nothing but by thy powerful word; when I see the rage of the swelling waves, naturally higher than the shores they beat upon, restrained to their bounds by thine over-ruling command; when I see the earth beau-

tifully garnished with marvellous variety of trees, herbs, flowers, richly stuffed with precious metals, stones, minerals; when I see, besides a world of men, the numberless choice and differences of the substance, forms, colours, dispositions of beasts, fowls, fishes, wherewith these lower elements are peopled; how can I but be dissolved into wonder of thine almighty power?

THE END

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